NEWS / A5

Wait is over!
Harry Potter book is here

ACROSS / A16

16 inmates including
4 suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits bolt Basilan jail

SUPER / E1

Beckhams invade
soccer-unfriendly US. Will it feel Beck effect? Should you care?

SAT. SPECIAL / G1

Julia Roberts'
16-year-old niece is another pretty woman

Senior moment for Lim: No 'Zona' in Manila

By DJ Yap

"IT'S JUST NOT HIS season moment.

Asked what he thought about the upcoming Sona, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim said: "Definitely, I will not allow that to

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, July 21, 2007 44 11 sections Vol. 22 / No. 223 P18 www.inquirer.net

PRICE OF FREEDOM: President Arroyo reminds a grateful PC Band at the Palace, "Did you know soldiers died for you?"

BSP worried; ₱ hits 7-year high of 44.80 to $1

By Dexter L. Lucas

THE PHILIPPINE PESO BREACHED the 45 level against the US dollar to close yesterday at P44.80, its highest finish in nearly seven years, boosted by foreign inflows into shares offers by telecompanies.

But the sharp appreciation of the peso has the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) worried.

The peso closed Friday at its intraday high of P44.80 against the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System (PDS), 20 centavos higher than the previous day's close of P45.01. It was the highest close since the peso hit P44.02 on Aug. 4, 2000.

Yesterday's strong finish marked the peso's eighth straight day of gains against the greenback which has steadily been losing ground against currencies worldwide.

BSP Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. warned that the peso was rising too fast against the US dollar and this posed certain risks to the market, but analysts did not interpret the remark as a prelude to currency controls.

"The rapid pace of appreciation is of some concern since this tends to in-

BSP, A3

Kidnap for kidnap did it

'We have your family,' gov't agents tell abductors

By Alcuin Papa
Julie T. Wilkins, Inquirer Mindanao
Artjo dela Cruz, Contributor

REJECTING RANSOM DEmands for Italian priest Fr. Giancarlo Bossi, government security forces dealt with his kidnappers in the only way they would understand.

On Saturday, the 32nd day of Bossi's captivity in Mindanao, government agents abducted the family of the kidnap group's leader in a to-be-set gamble, a source privy to the negotiations for the priest's release disclosed to the Inquirer yesterday. The source requested anonymity as he was not authorized to speak on the sensitive matter.

The leader's family included his wife and three children, all in their early teens, said the source.

The source said serious negotiations started on Saturday when the kidnappers made their demand for a ransom of P60 million.

"We're living. Magtaas na lang kayo (Negotiate. Just go and hide) because we have your family," the government negotiators told the kidnappers, according to the source.

The kidnap leader was taken aback by the statement and "almost went where he stayed 'to subsist ng," the source said.

On Thursday, the pressure appeared to

A FEW GOOD MEN: Fr. Giancarlo Bossi weeps during the press conference in Zamboanga City shortly after his release as he talks about the 14 Marines who were killed, 10 of them mutilated, during search and rescue operations for him in Basilan.

World leaders hail Fr. Bossi's release

By Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao
and DJC. Calleo jugan Jr. in Manila

IT WAS WORLD LEADERS YESTERDAY RE-joiced at the news of Fr. Giancarlo Bossi's release from captivity but the missionary himself broke the news on being told of the many lives lost in his behalf.

A police team found the 57-year-old Italian priest on Thursday night from the outskirts of highway in Ramonian, Lanao del Norte, apparently the pickup point agreed upon between the authorities and the kidnappers. (See Encounter story.)

Police found him walking barefoot. He had lost about 45 pounds but he had found his freedom back 30 days after he was last trapped while on his way to Mass in Datu Sinsuat (Maguin).

Some of Bossi's release first broke to Rome, where he has reportedly become a hero. Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi announced it to reporters, saying: "Fr. Giancarlo Bossi has been freed ... I'm truly emotional [today]."

"Today is his mother's birthday so it was like a very lovely coincidence," Prodi said.

Pope Benedict XVI received the news of Bossi's release with "great joy," the Vatican said. The 79-year-old last week said he was praying daily for Bossi's recovery.

There was also elation in Malacañang where President Macapagal-Arroyo wel-

WORLD, A14

Gracia, other terror victims speak up

By Christine O. Avendaño

AMID THE CRITICISMS AIMED against the controversial senator-to-be, the families of victims of terror attacks spoke yesterday about their personal grief and then with that other people would not suffer their fate.

Statement statement Gracia Burnham, who, with her husband Martin, endured a year being captives of the Abu Sayyaf, also expressed support for the Philippine government's efforts against terrorism. Her statement was read by Defense Undersecretary Rizalino

GRACIA, A7

Jonas NPA tag bolsters kin's fears

By TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño

THE FAMILY OF JESSENIE AC-cusa Jonas Burgos said yesterday that by branding him as a communist rebel, Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon was merely justifying his abduction on April 28.

Speaking for his family, Jonas' kin "El" Burgos said Esperon

JONAS, A9

HAVE PASSPORT, WILL TRAVEL: Ehdn Al' (4) Silvanna Aldana is reportedly the oldest recipient of the first batch of machine-readable passports released by the DFA on Friday. (Story on Page A2.)

Why no Sona, if there's no Speaker by Monday

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-AR-royo may end up not having elaborate last State of the Nation Address as the majority coalition remains deadlocked over who should become Speaker of the House of Representatives, a source there close before the opening of the new Congress.

This was the meeting issued by opposition representatives who said the failure to elect a House leader before the President is scheduled to address a joint ses-

sion could mean the scrapping of the Sona altogether.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez said the rules require that the House inform the Senate via a resolution that it has been organized and "are ready to receive the President for the Sona.

"Without a Speaker, a necessary quorum and a sergeant at arms, there is no organization of the House. If there is no organization of the House, there can be no resolution saying that it is ready to receive the President," said Ro-

MAYO SONA, A11

ESPERON BOSSED IN SPLENDOR: Leaders from the indigenous people in different parts of Mindanao in a meeting in Davao City on Thursday honored new Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon the title of Datu Tawagi, earned after a legendary tribal warrior in the 1600 era. Esperon said he got close to tribals in his early career as a commander in Mindanao.

Firm in $250-M scam has no license

By Dexter L. Lucas

THE PORTION EXCHANGE trading firm, Performance Investment Products Corp. (PIPC), whose investors have been left P250-million poorer after its owner disappeared, was not even licensed to offer investment contracts to clients, the Securities and Exchange Commission said yesterday.

The country's top corporate regulator said it tried to stop the operations of PIPC but was overruled by the courts.

SEC Chair Fe Barin said even though the PIPC was registered with the SEC, it was not authorized to engage in foreign exchange trading.

"They need a secondary license for this, and they don't have a secondary license," she said.

The SEC chair was nevertheless after reports came out that the Singaporean owner of PIPC, Michael Jaya, had disappeared, leaving the company's bank accounts here and abroad nearly empty.

As much as P250 million is believed to have been lost by the firm's investors.

Barin said the commission has been "quietly investigating" the PIPCs operations after complaints from investors began to surface.

She said the SEC was investigating the firm since projects (of its own accord), but would be asked imminently if a PIPC investor would come forward to file

SEC, A3

EZ2 4D/4A 2007
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WEATHER FORECAST

Gov't troops to pursue rebs in Basilan ambush

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE MILITARY IS SET TO launch punitive actions against Moro rebels behind the July 10 ambush and beheadings of Marine troops sent to Basilan to look for kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi.

Military officials said yesterday that the deadline for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which admitted to attacking the Marine troopers, to turn in the suspects was set to lapse after Sunday.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. had given the MILF one week to surrender the rebels who ambushed and beheaded the Marines in Albadan, Basilan so-called.

"We can now focus our available resources on running after the perpetrators of the beheading of our comrade Marines," military spokesman Lt. Col. Ricobalen Bacarro said, adding that the release of Bossi would now allow the military to do this.

The military has now a large presence in Basilan, having deployed Army and Marine brigades as well as two Marine battalions for the suspected "punitive actions" operation.

Bacarro admitted that the military had treaded carefully in the case of Bossi, as it obeyed pleas considerations on his safety.

"And now that Fr. Bossi is no longer within the group, it would be easier to conduct military and police actions against them because we no longer have a restriction or constraint to consider," he said.

After the one-week ultimatum, he said municipal, municipal commanders on the ground and Gen. Esperon were observers and that they should conduct raids based on the situations on the ground.

Punitive in a week

"The action that we are going to launch after the one-week deadline is the full-blown operation.

But before the military moves in to get the killers of the Marines, this would be based on validated information by its intelligence units, according to Bacarro.

"Our operations will be intelligence-driven, in a sense that we would like to allay other issues are fearing that there would be civilians who might be hurt in the operations that we are going to launch in Basilan," he said, adding that the operations would also "pave the way through the facilitation of the peace process."

Esperon earlier said that the MILF is to fight the military on his case. Esperon reiterated the military only intended to go after the perpetrators of the ambush.

"It is what country of action the MILF would take, then we'll wait and see," he said.

Esperon earlier said that the military would go after Bossi's abductors, saying that even though the latter released the Italian priest, the would move against them based on how they committed.

As to Bossi's claims that his abductors identified themselves as members of the Abu Sayyaf Group, he said data could be validated by the military.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said Bossi's release should not stop authorities from punishing those responsible for the gruesome double-if the Marines.

Biazon also said the MILF's pledge that the attack on the Marine contingent does not change the stand for the government to punish those who killed and swallowed 10 elite 14 soldiers.

He suspected that the growing pressure against the MILF over the gruesome killings of the Marines in Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, could have prompted the fellow group's release.

With a report from Donna Z. Pazzibugan

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo himself releases the new passport to Jimmie Rivera.

Oldest Pinoy jet-setter has newest passport

By Tarra Quismundo

THIS LEISURESAHAN GOLD is the oldest Filipino jet-setter.

Arsenal rancher Francisco Ashton, who will be turning 102 in October, was among the first batch of senior citizens to receive the new machine-readable passport (MRP), a maroon-covered booklet that uses facial recognition technology and embedded integrated circuit chip to enhance security.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo himself handed Ashton the new maroon passport at the Department of Foreign Affairs office in Pasay City yesterday afternoon, making her among around 1,000 recipients of the upgraded and more tamper-proof travel booklet the DFA started issuing to the elderly, disabled travelers and their dependents last week.

"I am very fortunate to be able to be given this chance to be the first... I am thankful to the Lord that I had this long life to be among the first to be issued a very systematic passport," Ashton told reporters in a soft voice, pausing as she spoke.

Dressed for the occasion in a gray-long suit matching gold accessories, Ashton looked her generation listed to rise in the unwound queues to receive audio.

The former educator, who started teaching in the 1930s, said she had no reason for passport so far, but could visit her children and their children—at New Jersey.

"I am very thankful to our dear Lord that I still have the chance and ability to travel," said Ashton, who, if included her long life to enjoy of personal and still, stories of trains, "wishing himself and loving all things beautiful."

Ashton, who would be traveling with a companion on her 10 trip, had last gone to the States in 1997, the same year her only son, lawyer Ben, passed, died in an accident she declined to specify.

Ashton's memories of Calbayog City are also among the proud recipients of the new Philippine passport.

"I am thankful that I was given the new passport. Now, we can travel abroad with other countries. And the service was very quick. I was surprised so first. And I'm very happy," said Torres, who got his own passport over days after the DFA opened applications for selected seniors of the public.

We were right all along about Bossi —MILF

By Jeoffrey Maitem

ZAMBOANGA CITY—IF ONLY THE MILITARY heeded them, the ambush of the Marines could have been avoided.

This claimed the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which yesterday said that the release of Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi in Lanao del Norte only proved that the information they had given the military—but which were ignored—were correct all along.

The MILF had earlier told the military that Bossi was not in Basilan.

The MILF said Bossi's release in Lanao del Norte proved that the intelligence were wrong to go to Basilan to look for the kidnapped priest.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, said had the military listened to them, the incident in Albadan, Basilan, could have been averted.

"In Marines were certain they went to camp if on a fable search for Bossi when they were misled by some ASG false orders, killing 14 Marines, of whom 10 were beheaded and mutilated.

Iqbal said they have been telling the military that Bossi was not in Basilan but they were ignored.

"We are happy that indeed the priest was released. However, we were saddened that more lives were lost due to the intelligence report suggesting the priest presence in Basilan," he said.

Iqbal said the MILF believes the military had deliberately ignored the MILF information and could operate on their own discretion.

"It's clear the military lied and used the report to push its attack in Basilan," he said.

The military, however, denied committing a serious boundary out by Marines in Basilan.

"I believe that we did not make any mistakes. If you tell it to mistakes. Because we responded to all information that was provided to us and reached us," military spokesperson Lt. Col. Bacarro said.

The military initially looked for Bossi in Zamboanga Sibugay where he was abducted but later on changed its direction to Lanao del Norte to Basilan after getting reports that the Italian priest might be in those areas.

Iqbal said the efforts of authorities to connect the Bossi kidnapping to the MILF were thought the priest himself already said it was the Abu Sayyaf, one already a suspect. —*With a report from Norma Ala Santos, Inquirer Mindanao*

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BUHAY ROW

El Shaddai man wins out in Comelec verdict

By Nikko Dizon

THE FEUD BETWEEN THE TWO SETS OF nominees of the Pwr. 1 party-list group, Buhay (Buhay Hayaan Yumabong), has finally been resolved by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

In a resolution promulgated last Tuesday, the Comelec en banc recognized the presidency of Bibhpandak "Bibi" Robles and nominee, namely, his mother-in-law party.

This saved the seat for the set of nominees endorsed by Robles to be the duly recognized Buhay party-list representatives in the 14th Congress, and end the set of nominees endorsed by Hans Christian Antonio, who represented the party in the last Congress.

Petitioner Hans a million votes garnered in the last mid-term elections, Buhay is the only party group entitled to three seats in the House of Representatives in the 14th Congress.

Robles' nominees are led by Rene Velarde, son of El Shaddai religious movement leader, Bro. Mariano "Mike" Velarde. The other nominees are Celeste Gonzalez, Wilfrido Irene Tiang, Melchor Monreal and Teresita Villena, etc.

El Shaddai spokesman

Robles was El Shaddai spokesperson until his appointment as head of the Light Railway Transit Authority (LRTA).

"After a thorough evaluation of the records submitted by the parties, together with the arguments during the hearing of the case, the Commission has been to vote made—we viewed that Robles is the president of Buhay party-list (group) and therefore duly authorized to sign documents in behalf of the party, particularly the nominations to participate in the party-list system," the Comelec said in a six-page resolution.

It added that while Robles' term in Buhay party president ended in 2006, there were no records that showed the party held no elections to replace the set of officers led by the former El Shaddai official.

The Comelec said the absence of records that would "interpretably" show Robles had been replaced as party president indicated that Robles was still acting in Buhay president in a hold-over capacity.

"This is the only logical consequence of the omission of records since Buhay cannot operate as a party for organization without its canvass of officers. And considering the position in a hold-over capacity, he is duly allowed in order not to hamper the operations of the party and to prevent a hiatus in party leadership," the Comelec said in its resolution.

It also junked Velarde's argument that Robles, being a government official, cannot participate in a partisan political activity.

Police in Metro placed on alert for Sona

By Rimsky Pagsa

POLICE IN METRO MANILA WERE PLACED on alert today ahead of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) as the opening of the 14th Congress on Monday.

Philippine National Police Chief Director General Oscar Calderon yesterday also ordered police regional commanders and heads of support units of the PNP to go on "heightened alert."

Calderon earlier ordered the deployment of 16,000 policemen to serve as security forces in anticipation of protest actions by militant groups. Around 6,000 anti-riot policemen will be deployed around the Batasan complex in Quezon City and the rest in Mendiola and around the metropolis.

Civil disturbance management (CDM) units in regions near Metro Manila will augment police operations in the metropolis.

A "full alert" means all personnel must be at their posts at all times. All leaves are also canceled. A "heightened" alert means half of the personnel on a police unit must be at their posts at all times.

PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said the PNP is "well prepared" to keep the peace and order situation in the base.

Senate row won't blow over; opposition rift widens

By Dona Pazzibugan

BUREAU OF BLOWING OVER, the 6th among opposition senators themselves (Gatchee blows up).

Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday fired a scathing verbal attack against his colleagues likening Senators Manuel Villar, Jinggoy Estrada, Francis Escudero and Alan Peter Cayetano to "political mongrels" for collaborating with administration senators to form the new Senate majority bloc.

Lacson, Villar, Escudero and Cayetano won their seats in the May 14 elections under the Genuine Opposition ticket, along with Senators Loren Legarda, Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Antonio Trillanes IV.

Together with five incumbent opposition senators, the opposition could have wrested control of the Senate by forming the new majority. But unity talks bogged down amid the senators' unyielding support for either Villar or Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is currently serving the post of Senate president.

"No matter how the final scenario of the so-called Genuine Opposition try to define their bond, they won't be able to present an authentic certificate to disabuse the minds of our voters and supporters," Lacson said yesterday.

Political mongrels

"They will always be senators-bereft as political mongrels who turned their backs on their colleagues and helped compose the new majority bloc in the Senate in collaboration with mostly administration senators," he went on.

To keep the Senate presidency, Villar courted the support of seven administration senators, two independent senators and three opposition senators, namely Estrada, Escudero and Cayetano.

Lacson said Villar and the three senators robbed an agreement that all the opposition senators—the seven newly elected and the five incumbents—should unite in a bloc to wrest control of the Senate from the administration allies.

He went on to say that the four's decision to join forces with administration senators to form a new majority bloc contradicted their claim of being opposition senators.

"No matter how they try to justify the unjustifiable, they will always fall short," Lacson hinted.

Estrada, Escudero and Cayetano have insisted that despite their support for Villar, they were still with the opposition.

They said they had not changed their mind on issues besieging the Arroyo administration.

Of the three, Escudero has been more strident in defending himself, using the occasion of an opposition convention on Thursday to hit back at his fellow opposition senators for "unfairly" branding them as pro-administration.

"Who is the real opposition? Those who speak a lot and have divisiveness, or those who control their emotions though they are hurt?," Escudero had told the gathering held on Dolt-Pilipinas.

Looking to 2010

He even chided other opposition senators, saying they were motivated by personal interests that looked to the 2010 presidential election.

Like Escudero, Estrada claimed that not all those in the minority bloc were with the opposition.

"Many pressed they are members of the opposition. There's a 'mention' (half-breed) administration, 'mention' opposition," he had said without naming anyone.

Lacson, who ran against Fernando Poe Jr. and President Macapagal-Arroyo in the 2004 presidential elections, said he did not feel that Estrada tapped him.

"I don't feel alluded to. But that's the spin of Villar on Mar [Roxas] and Loren [Legarda] and the three of them dutifully adopt and follow," he said.

"So for the eight of us who have chosen to remain [in the minority bloc], we will continue to play our role to check the abuses of the executive branch in a manner we know best and in manner what the core," Lacson said.

"We now leave it to the wisdom of the people to judge who among us belong to the real and true opposition," he said.

Aside from the leadership of the Senate, senators are also wrangling for leadership of the major committees.

Estrada, Cayetano and Escudero have said that the major committees, particularly the blue ribbon committee that investigates public accountability, should be handled by an opposition senator.

Lacson has declared he wanted to chair the blue ribbon committee previously chaired by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

The senators will select the next Senate president through a vote on July 23, the formal opening of the 14th Congress.

Corrections

In "THE JULY 10 ISSUE, Ramon Tulfo's "On Target" column on Page A18 of the Metro section—"Mrs. Imelda did not take part in sabotage of Marcos"—misstated that the DC 10 is a helicopter. The DC-10 is an airplane.

* * *

IN THE APRIL 15 ISSUE, the editorial on Page A12—"Volunteer control"—misstated that the Philippine National Red Cross is not a government agency. PNRC is a government-owned and -controlled corporation.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in stories by Daily Inquirer Philippine News Inquirer 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Buendia Street, Makati City, fax line 897-67-53 (96) e-mail address: dyan@philnews.com.ph.

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Presented and cooked to perfection by KUNDA LA FRINZA

Reyes prepares for 'tough job'

New energy czar out to defy Miriam, says he's flattered

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER OVER 40 YEARS IN GOVERNMENT, Secretary Angelo Reyes has gotten used to "moving to and out" of Cabinet posts (but he doesn't mind handling it on a part-time basis).

"I'm flattered by it," said Reyes when in probably the only Cabinet team appointed in several years in the 6-year-old Arroyo administration.

"How many people line up for a Cabinet position? If you're chosen from among so many, then you should be honored, and I don't think I can decline the challenge."

But administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago has threatened to block Reyes' confirmation before the Commission on Appointments for alleged incompetence.

After a brief, 17-month-long stint at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Reyes, 62, will take over the post of Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla in a few days, his fourth Cabinet position.

Big challenge

Reyes said he has a "tough job ahead of him" at the Department of Energy, a job for which Defense Santiago said he had no qualifications.

"I consider this appointment as a very trying challenge and I accept it with all humility, and accept my ignorance over this matter," he said.

His priority, he said, would be to privatize the country's power generation assets.

REYES

Bearing in mind questioning his lack of experience in the energy sector, Reyes argued that he also had no experience when he entered his posts in the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), the antiterrorism task forces, and later, at the DENR.

Reyes had served as secretary of the Department of Defense from 2001 to 2003, later quitting in the aftermath of the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny, he handled low-profile jobs as head of task forces on antikidnapping and antismuggling.

He was later named to the top post at the DILG, and then DENR in February last year.

In an interview with reporters on Thursday, Reyes admitted that he didn't expect President Macapagal-Arroyo to consign him to another post.

"I always maintain that unless I assume a job, I'm there for the long haul. I'm not there for the short terms, because unless you're there for the short-term, then you make short-term decisions," he said.

'Grave abuse'

Presidential lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. noted that the President has appointed five DENR chiefs in six years.—Reburwen Alvarez, Elmer Soriao, Michael Dobusan, Reyes and now, former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

He called it a "grave abuse of discretion" and amounted to "backwards environmental governance."

Reyes had served as retired Forest chief during the Estrada administration.

His withdrawal of support from then President Joseph Estrada in January 2001 following the aborted impeachment trial was seen as a crucial factor in the success of the "people's revolt" that toppled Estrada and catapulted then Vice President Arroyo to the presidency.

By Reyes' reckoning, his job at the DENR wasn't "finished yet," but he believed he had "accomplished results" in a short time.

Ofelia Bautista of Mother Earth said Reyes' transfer to the DOE as the "unkindest cut of all," saying he was the "only secretary in living memory" women can to trouble environmental groups.

GMA standing by new Cabinet appointees

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS standing by her recent appointments to her Cabinet despite protests from the administration's detractors and the opposition.

In an interview with reporters, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that the President would not be shaken if newly appointed Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes and Environment Secretary Lito Atienza would not get the nod of the Commission on Appointments.

Reyes will take over the post of outgoing Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla who opted to resign while Atienza will replace Reyes at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"We all know that 12 of her Cabinet members have yet to be confirmed," said Ermita.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago has already declared she would vote against the appointment of the CA while environment groups have vowed to block Atienza's takeover of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ermita, however, said that the President could opt to withdraw her appointment of Reyes and Atienza. "Everything is possible under the sun. From those who have already been confirmed can also be replaced. That is the process," said Ermita.

But Ermita stressed the President need not withdraw the appointments as it was her prerogative to choose those who she thinks was qualified for the job. —GMA Gathering Jr.

High court affirms gov't hospitals' privatization

By Jerome Aning

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY paved the way for the privatization of government hospitals when it upheld the constitutionality of the privatization program, junking all challenges against the policy that was formulated by President Joseph Estrada in 1999.

The court, in a 23-page en banc decision penned by Associate Justice Minita Chico-Nazario, dismissed the petition filed by Health Alliance for Democracy, Council for Health Empowerment, Network Opposed to Privatization, Community Medicine Development Foundation Inc. and the Philippine Society of Sanitary Engineers Inc.

Other petitioners were Rita Aleya Uro, Gabriela, Alliance Magkakaibigan ng Pilipinas, and Kalipunan ng Samahan ng mga Manggagawa sa Ospital ng Bataan (Bataan Government Employees Association, Cong. Teodoro Casiño, Jose Galang, Dominga Ilarina, Tito Guerrero, Eduardo Gallego, Bernardito Ventura, Edgardo Sumerog, Bernardito Muñoz and Rogelio Mercado.

Associate Justice Antonio Eduardo Nachura inhibited from the case, having signed the government's pleadings as solicitor general.

The Supreme Court refused to rule on the petitioners' allegation that DOH's actual fee destroyed the health of the people as they would be denied access to free medicine once government hospitals were privatized.

"The question of whether the DOH's full being alone the devolution, upgrade or disintegration of the health services system to redress the results of the political department," the justices said.

They also said that reorganization provided by RA 8180 was to make the economic and functionary more efficient and that the petitioners "miserably failed" to substantiate their claim that they might be laid off, reassigned to far-flung areas or suffer lowered wages.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, July 21, 2007
16th Week in Ordinary Time
Liturgical Color: Green

1st Reading: Jer 23:1-6
Gospel: Matthew 12:14-21

"For whatever seen one sent made plans to get rid of him. As Jesus was aware of this, he went away from that place. Many people followed him and he cured all who were sick. Then he gave them strict orders not to make him known.

In this way Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled:

"'Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him and he will announce my judgment to the nations.

"He will not argue or shout, nor will his voice be heard in the streets. The bruised reed he will not crush, and the smoldering wick he will not put out, till he leads justice on to victory. And in his name all the nations will put their hope."

Commentary:

Nearly the Israelites are allowed to leave Egypt after sojourning there for 430 years. The night of April is the Passover and the Lord leads them out of slavery, their unbondage. He also "saves" them in the desert, and he formed them a people, and then God will bring them to the land promised to their ancestors. Egypt is any place of bondage and the Exodus are to hold this night throughout every generation. It is what we are living, it is what hope and their meaning in the world.

Perhaps neither shepherd nor sheep is doing so. And yet he mentioned what he was here to do: preach the Word, set people free, and bring justice to the nations. He does not cry out and contend for he is careful that the bruised reed is not crushed and the smoldering wick not quenched. He is our God of life, our God of tenderness, our God of compassion, our God "who" to unfollowed him who is our hope and our Saviour and our peace.

Will Harry Potter die? Answer known today

By Pam Pastor

TODAY, AT SEVEN IN THE MORNING, fans of Harry Potter will storm bookstores around the country, eager to be among the first to grab a copy of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows."

The book, written by J.K. Rowling, is the last in the seven-part epic tale of the life of the young wizard.

The book's release had been widely anticipated around the world. For months, Potter devotees in the Philippines have visited various bookstores, posting in advance to ensure that a copy is set aside under their name. Local bookstore chain Powerbooks has brought in 15,000 copies of the book—6,000 of which have already been reserved. Bookstores around the country have been gearing up for the release, planning to store sweets and provisions to lure Potter fans.

In a number of other countries, like Indonesia and Australia, the books will be released at midnight. "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" has already snagged the number one spot on Amazon.com's best-seller list even before being released—with 22 million books pre-ordered by book lovers worldwide.

Rowling and the publishing companies handling the books' release are taking the roadmaps very seriously—in their desire not to ruin the excitement for fans worldwide. In the United States, the announcers of Deepblue.com, an Illinois supplier, received their copies in the mailbox early. The company is facing legal action.

Potter lover has hit the world again and countless of dialogues and spoilers have appeared online, leading the frenzy even more. Scholastic, the US publisher of the Harry Potter series, and Bloomsbury, the publisher in Britain, quickly jumped to action, asking websites to take down the spoilers.

While many of the crucial points proved to be bogus, a number of items have been proven accurate.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer managed to secure a copy of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" and it lives up to its title—two characters are killed within the first one hundred pages. The writer starts early—with appearances from the evil Lord Voldemort in the first few chapters. Although beloved Hogwarts Headmaster Albus Dumbledore died in the previous book, "Harry Potter and The Half-Blood Prince," he is still very much in the picture—as it is Potter discovering secrets not just about his own family but also about Dumbledore's past. The young wizard warns: If you like books and fun, you will enjoy a more mature Potter in this untold history.

Harry Potter has gone a long way from being just an idea that came to Rowling's mind on a train ride from Manchester to London in 1990. Since that day, 325 million copies of the book in 64 languages have been sold worldwide, with the series spawning movies, toys and other merchandise. It has also catapulted Rowling from being a struggling single mom to becoming Britain's richest woman.

With the release of "The Deathly Hallows," the time has come to bid the Harry Potter series goodbye—and luckily for readers, good-byes is 759 pages, 36 chapters and a epilogue long.

POTTER POWER. copies of "Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows," the last installment in the Harry Potter series, arrive at Powerbooks Greenbelt. The books will be released at 7:01 a.m. today

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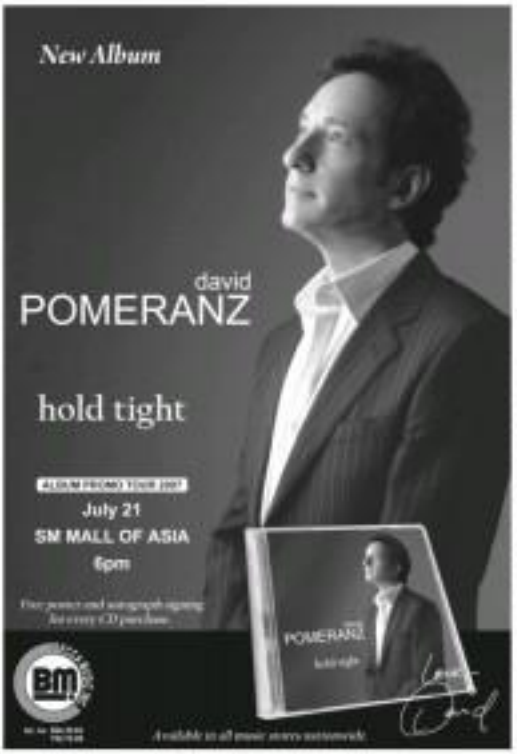

Trade dep't warns stores on banned Chinese sweets

By Ramon W. Dandoy

TRADE SECRETARY PETER B. FAVILA YESTERday ordered food stores of the late opinion retains Chinese food imports, saying businessmen should pull their products out of the shelves or face facing up to jail time of up to P200,000.

He said the Department of Trade and Industry will be sending people out to the shops to make sure the Bureau of Food and Drugs's ban against the food items is followed.

He said he had instructed all DTI regional and provincial directors to coordinate with the BFAD and local government units to unanimously conduct market visits and check the stores in their areas.

The BFAD has banned the distribution and sale of Rhino Rubber Creamy Candy Milk Candy, Rabbit Gum Biscuits and Yang Yang Fresh Crisps Biscuits.

BFAD ordered the Chinese-made food products pulled out of the market after test results showed that they contained the disinfectant and preservative formaldehyde, popularly known as formalin. Health experts say prolonged use of the chemical could lead to lung cancer.

Favila said that under the Consumer Act, violators could be charged with the crime of selling inferior or harmful products.

"This is a nationwide market enforcement. We will particularly be monitoring stores near schools to protect students who are the main consumers of these products," he said.

"We are also appealing to consumers to stop buying these products until tests have been completed," he added.

Favila said distributors and importers of food products should make sure that their imports are safe for consumers before releasing them to the market.

"We are advising them to coordinate with the BFAD before they make the products available to consumers," he said.

Local distributor

The BFAD memorandum said the Shanghai-based manufacturer of the banned Chinese White Rabbit candy had no standing in the country to protest the bureau's findings and was against its product.

BFAD deputy director Joshua Romero said only the local distributor of the candy, Chong Hua Wah Co., and not Guang Sheng Yuan Co., the Chinese-based manufacturer, is a legal basis, subject to Philippine laws.

He said Guang Sheng's request for a copy of the BFAD test results was without basis and in accordance to the BFAD's actions were "unjustifiable."

Guang Sheng the other day accused the BFAD's claim, insisting that its products have passed its own tests and their standards.

Romero said the BFAD has already given notice of the ban and directed Chong Hua Wah and Co. to recall the Chinese-imported White Rabbit candies, but has yet to get a response from the local distributor.

He said the proper procedure, under the country's law, have been observed.

In cases where food products and cosmetics are found "tainted," the BFAD issues a recall order to the known establishment distributing the product in the country and the importer of the goods, setting a prescriptive period for the product's or products' withdrawal from the market. With a report from Jimmuel C. Naval

New players hike oil prices

By Abigail L. Flo

AHEAD OF THE MAJOR OIL FIRMS, NEW OIL players jacked up prices of their gasoline products by 50 centavos per liter to offset the high cost of the product in the new national market.

Eastern Petroleum Corp. raised prices as soon Thursday, while Total Petroleum Philippines has hiked prices as it was yesterday.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the regional wholesale Dubai is anticipated to an average of $69.17 a barrel in the July 1-20 period, from the June average of $65.79 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum product is expected to an average of $66.96 a barrel in the first 20 days of July from the June average of $64.79 a barrel.

The all-time high price of $92.30 a barrel for MOPS-based unleaded gasoline was recorded last May 10.

MOPS-based diesel likewise soared to an average price of $85.20 a barrel as of July 13, from the June average of $64.20 a barrel.

This fuel price hike was the 30th this year for gasoline for a total of P5.50 a liter.

Since the start of the year, pump prices of gasoline have also been reduced by a total of P1.40 a liter.

The price hike brings premium unleaded gasoline prices to between P39.97 and P42.27 a liter and unleaded gasoline to between P38.55 and P41.49 a liter.

from the top

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Gracia, other terror victims speak up

From page A1

de Blancaflor at the memorial service for victims' victims, which was part of Malacañang's official launch of the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007.

The HSA took effect on July 15.

"I wish to thank the Philippine government for their commitment to eradicating terrorism in some areas of the world," Bonifacio said. "I have read recent reports in magazines [and] newspapers and on the Internet that give glowing testimony of our progress in Southern Philippines. It does my heart good to hear that."

The Bonifacios, longtime missionaries in the Philippines, were among a group abducted by the Abu Sayyaf from a resort in Palawan in May 2001 and taken to Basilan. Gracia was rescued in Zamboanga in June 2002; Martin and 19 others—some Filipinos like nurse killed in the gun battle between troops and the extremists.

Memorial service

The memorial service was organized by the Department of National Defense for the families of victims of terror attacks like the Superferry 14 bombing in February 2004 that killed 116 people, and the simultaneous bombings on Valentine's Day 2000 in the cities of Makati, Davao and General Santos in which a total of 13 people died and scores of others were wounded.

The Superferry bombing is considered the worst terror attack in the Philippines and the world's deadliest such attack at sea.

Grazia Burchett, now back in her native Estonia in the United States, was invited to the service held at the common grave for the Superferry bombing victims at the Loyola Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City. According to Blancaflor, she could not make it because she was on a lecture tour.

Blancaflor said the memorial service was "both a celebration of life and death."

He said the Philippines was second to the United States in terms of the number of overseas—US$—killed in terror-related attacks.

'Too young to die'

Even if the Superferry bombing happened more than three years ago, Cynthia Filipinas' memory of how she lost her then 17-year-old son Rodel remains fresh—and painful.

Speaking at the service, Filipinas said her son, a Mindanao State University student who was heading home after attending a conference in Laguna, was "too young to die" and "did not deserve that kind of death."

"What's that happened, my whole world was shattered ... I feel the pain he was experienced in that tragedy. Until now the pain is with me," Filipinas said, adding that she had wanted Rodel to become a doctor.

"My only hope is that in the future, no other parents would suffer what we are suffering ... I hope there will be no other parents that will suffer against terrorism," she said.

Mike Clifford Calubaog said his family's dreams were dashed when his father, assistant director Calubaog, died in the Superferry bombing.

Calubaog said his mother had to take on the role of family breadwinner when his father was killed.

Lives and dreams

Blancaflor told the assembly that the sacrifice of the grieving families showed that "terrorism destroys not only lives but also dreams."

Addressing the critics of the HSA, he said the victims were "not just human statistics but Filipinos like us."

He also said the families of terror victims would continue to serve as an "inspiration" for the government in the fight against terrorism.

Blancaflor said President Macapagal-Arroyo had worked hard for the passage of an antiterror law.

"On this morning, we are here not only to remember the dead but to also inspire the living, let us look forward," he said.

To do this, he said, one should "accept that terrorism is real and very much with us."

He said terrorists could "destroy thousands of us," but could not destroy "our hearts and our dreams."

What could have been

And the way Ms Arroyo sees it, the HSA would have prevented all terror acts in the country had it been enacted a decade ago.

"Our eye imagine the possibilities had we passed this law [earlier]. Perhaps, the Oro Nellas [resort] incident would not have happened, and Joanna Demafelis would not have lost her husband Martin. Many Filipino lives could have been spared had the state been equipped with legal arsenal to finish our evil before it could do harm," the President said in a speech at the HSA launch in Malacañang, which was attended by Cabinet officials, lawmakers, the victims' families, and diplomats led by US Ambassador Kristie Kenney.

"Our resolve to criminalize and penalize terrorism through this law is not an offshoot of 9/11 for we had come face to face with this scourge ahead of the rest of the world," Ms Arroyo said.

She said the few antiterror bill filed in Congress was anchored by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile in January 1990, "three years after the then bombing of the World Trade Center [in New York], five years before the third [largest] bombing in 2000, six and a half years before the 9/11 tragedy, and eight years before the Superferry bombing."

The awards mentioned by Ms Arroyo were highlighted in an audio-visual presentation aimed at increasing public awareness of the terror threat.

Legal muscle

According to the President, the HSA "means the bar on our campaign against terrorism who kill, bomb and maim to enforce an ideology of evil."

She said the HSA gave the government "the legal muscle to end the pervasive of fear, empowered with a law that identifies terrorism and penalizes it, a law that preserves and preserves freedom."

Referring to the loud opposition to the law, Ms Arroyo said: "Talk is cheap. It is action that counts. I ask the public to give the Human Security Act a chance."

She said her administration would look "well-thought-out investments in crushing terrorism wherever it threatens, regardless of ideology, and in putting a stop to human rights abuses whatever the source." With a report from Jil C. Cabacungan Jr.

NIGHTMARE ON PODIO: The Bonifacios, Gracia and Martin, are in the audio-visual presentation shown to victims of terrorism at the formal launch of the Antiterror Law at the Palace on Friday

Southern Tagalog activists to march in QC to protest terror law

ACTIVISTS IN SOUTHERN TAGALOG TEA TODAY said they would hold a mass action on the day of President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address to protest the newly implemented antiterror law.

Dely Marcellana, chair of the Bagong Mymiang Makabayan (Bayan) in Southern Tagalog, said members of militant groups in the region were heading north for the protest gun effects of the Human Security Act [HSA].

Six each hundreds of protesters from Southern Tagalog will march on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City on July 23.

Marcellana said they had long been living under a climate of terror through an "undeclared martial law," as mentioned, he said, in the large deployment of soldiers in rural areas and the wide range of human rights violations.

A total of 2,725 rights violations, mostly victimizing leftist activists, have been recorded in Southern Tagalog since 2001, when Ms Arroyo came to power, Marcellana said. Jeffrey Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Kidnap for kidnap did it; P4M paid, say sources

Troop says it's true. Bosst.

"The source said that as soon as the police got word that Bosst had been released, they also released the kidnap leader's family.

"This was a purely police (multi-prong) operation," the source said.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno refused to give details of the negotiations but said the government applied "intense pressure" on the kidnappers.

He refused to elaborate, and merely quoted the familiar expression, "What is unsaid is for the pressure to be the speaker."

In an interview with the hostage, Bosst said his kidnappers were all crossing before releasing him.

"They told me that they are taking custody for P5M (million)," he said. But he said he did not know if any ransom was paid.

Trade secrets

Senior Supt. Manuel Barrera, Zamboanga City police chief, said the government negotiators used "every trade in the book" to convince the captors to release the priest.

"We used pay-wee ... (Isn't it clear)," Barrera said.

As to what exactly he told the captors which convinced them, Barrera did not say. "I can't provide details because those are trade secrets," he said.

Director Hermogenes police commander Chief Supt. Jaime Carino also said they used an "intervention approach" during the negotiations but also refused to reveal what it was.

When asked if "pay-wai" was part of the police approach, Carino said "yes ... it's partly pay-wai."

Cradle military pressure

He also cited the "massive military operations" by the Armed Forces of the Philippines as a "pressure point."

Barrera said the government adopted a "two-pronged" approach to resolve the kidnapping through negotiations and military operations.

"We smuggled these measures so they could not move around. They were on the run a lot," Barrera said.

Barrera reportedly tapped former Tabuan, Basilan Mayor Hasjan Jamiri, a former Moro leader Liberation Front (MNLF) commander, as chief negotiator to reach out to Bosst's captors.

Barrera was previously assigned in Basilan and had fought Jamiri.

A source in Camp Crame who sponsored not to be named for security reasons said the military at one point was itching to grab Jamiri to force Bosst's captors to release the priest, not knowing he was being used by Barrera.

'Board and lodging'

Barrera is one of the most trusted men of Cottingal, a member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class of 1976 and considered an "intelligence expert," a Camp Crame source said.

Another government source said that while extreme pressure played a part in the release of Bosst, some monetary consideration also was a factor.

"P4 million was handed to the abductors as board and lodging for, that's the term used, but you know that it's ransom," the source said.

"Board and lodging" is a term used in kidnapping negotiations in order to "negotiate" supposedly incurred by kidnappers in keeping their hostage.

The source did not say how the P4 million was handed to the kidnappers ... said to be members of an MILF "Lost Command"—but pointed out that those who negotiated for the "board and lodging" payment had no choice.

"You win a key element but the bigger pressure in this case was to preserve the peace process between the government and the MILF," the source said.

The source said the information authorities had gathered was Bosst was only a target of rogue MILF elements, who went to Bosst him way to the Abu Sayyaf Group.

The source said the women was obvious: A group was working on the collapse of the peace process—giving credence to suspicion of an alliance between some MILF factions and the ASG.

Malacañang emissary?

"I just don't know if the Indian government or the Philippine government gave payment to the kidnappers," Bosst said, when asked about the rebels' demands for money in exchange for his freedom.

Authorities said no ransom was paid but an unknown said a government emissary "close to Malacañang" was in the area before Bosst was released.

"As far as I know, he was bringing an initial amount of (P) million. Maybe that's for the ransom or for the boys," the source said.

Bosst apparently had a sense on Thursday afternoon that his release was at hand.

He said that about 5 p.m., he and some of his kidnappers were told to walk from Barangay Bayog to Kanmanoan, Lamao del Norte, to the national highway.

They reached the highway at around 7 p.m.

Bosst said he was escorted by his kidnappers toward the main road, we walked for about two hours last night," Bosst told reporters yesterday.

Bosst said his kidnappers had identified themselves as members of the Abu Sayyaf Group. He claimed to have met three in Abu Jimam and Abu Khabil.

Bosst said he was never brought to Basilan and that during his 39 days in captivity, they stayed in Jolo and Sulu by boat.

"(After) they took me from Parang (Zamboanga Sibugay), they brought me to Lamao ... We went to Kanomanan by boat. Secret to (Basilan)," Bosst said in a mixture of Hiligaynon and English.

Never in Basilan

Bosst said his kidnappers treated him well "but my problem are food. Sometimes, rice, tuh, added fish for breakfast, lunch and dinner."

Bosst said he did not believe ill feelings toward his captors and even told them he prayed at night for them.

If there was one thing Bosst liked about being in captivity, it was that he learned to quit smoking.

"I used to smoke a lot, and then one day suddenly we were walking and we were asked to climb a mountain and when we reached the top of the mountain, my breathing was very heavy, so I told myself that if I wanted to survive, with the kind of food, better stop smoking," he said.

THIS IS LA DOLCE VITA, no doubt for Father Bosst in Zamboanga City where he holds his first post-release press conference as he takes in hot soup after enjoying on a diet of rice, salt and dried fish the past 39 days.

World leaders hail Father Bossi's release

Troop says it's true. Bosst, but it was tinged with overtone of remorse on Bosst's part.

"She congratulated me and then she told me that a lot of people (who) (the pope) spoke to (Basilan) his lord' meeting with his Arroyo, which lasted less than five minutes.

"I think that in a sense I have responsible," he added.

Bosst was referring to the death of 14 Philippine Marines and one Basilan islander in Mindanao gunmen on Basilan island on July 18 as they were searching for Bosst, mistakenly thinking he was being held by his captor Dipsy.

Earlier in Zamboanga City on Bosst being released, the deaths of the Marines—10 of whom were beheaded—Bosst broke down and cried.

"They were there looking for me and instead they were am, instead they disturbed me," Bosst told Zamboanga reporters, between sobs.

Mother in Milan

He said he hoped to meet the families of the slain Marines and that he was extending his "deepest condolences" to them. He also said he wanted to see what he could do to help the Marines' families.

Bosst also became emotional and cried again when asked how he felt on speaking on the phone to Mr. 37-year-old mother, Amalia, in Milan, Italy, shortly after his release.

"Instead of me giving her a birthday present, I was the present," he said. "It's like I feel my mother gave this present."

In a statement which is an addition other she left Bosst following their meeting, Mr. Arroyo said: "She rejoice over the safe release of Michel Bosst. We thank our soldiers, police and concerned civilians who valiantly worked for his liberation. Father Bossi is now in good hands. We pray that he could soon gather his strength and recover from his ordeal."

Mr. Arroyo met Bosst in a photo op over at the Palace reception hall, posing for television cameramen and newspaper photographers.

'My heart is still in Papuo'

Mr. Arroyo shook the priest's hand, talked with him briefly and then made her exit, pretending to witness the inauguration of the Metro Manila Skyway project.

Bosst, who belongs in the congregation Pontifical Institute for Foreign Mission (PIME), stayed on at the Palace for another 30 minutes, telling reporters how he learned from a general about the death of the 14 Filipinos shortly after he was released Thursday night.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has admitted killing the Marines in an encounter and Sipadan, but insisted it was not the 10 soldiers. Some military officials blamed the beheading on the Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Bosst said he looked forward to resuming his work as a missionary in Papuo, in Zamboanga del Norte province which he now knows well.

Given a chance, he still wants to go back to his parish.

"The people of Papuo are close to my heart," he said. "My heart is still in Papuo."

Day in the jungle

A typical day was waking up in the morning at 4:30 or 5 o'clock, moving around and then arriving at some place at 7 o'clock at night, "when it's not time to go to sleep."

"It was difficult to sleep during the day because in the forest there are a lot of mosquitoes. So we had to fight the mosquitoes," he said.

"(I was praying), thinking of all the friends, my family, what's going on, (the mind) always working just to keep me alive."

Bosst said he lost between 30 and 40 pounds due to the stress and to a diet of rice, fish and salt.

Fr. Glenn Bardelas Sandalo, regional superior of PIME, said upon dropping when his phone rang early morning yesterday.

On the other line was Chief Supt. Jaime Carlingal, Western Mindanao police director, telling the good news to him: Bosst was a few hours.

"I received a phone call telling me to proceed to the police headquarters," Sandalo said (referring to Camp Bardilla, the regional police headquarters in Zamboanga.

11 kidnappers

It was at the headquarters that he saw his friend, looking very thin.

"We found him along the highway of Kanomanan. He was somewhat quite lost but we sensed that he knew he'll be freed," Carlingal told the reporters.

Carlingal said Bosst, clad in blue checkered polo shirt and shorts, was barefoot when government security forces found him.

He told us he was wallowing from 11M (some) (some movements) and that he drank water from the river," Carlingal said.

Recounting Bosst's ordeal, Sandalo said: "Bossi's told us that he was being held by 11 kidnappers but as days go by, one by one, his captors abandoned him until only five people (were left) guarding him."

Asked who the abductors were, Sandalo said Bosst told him the captors identified themselves as from the Abu Sayyaf.

But Carlingal said authorities maintained that a "Sol. commend" from the MILF abducted Bosst.

Ex-mayor chief negotiator

"They involved the Alonkalan brothers led by Abdullah Alonkalan and his brother Nasser, so basically his rapors are members of the MILF (Gregorio) forces," he said.

The MILF has denied its forces were behind Bosst's kidnapping.

Asked if ransom was paid, Carlingal said he was not aware of money changing hands.

Carlingal said authorities failed up with former Tabuan, Basilan Mayor Hajarat Jamiri's help in the negotiations.

"Communication (with Jamiri) became constant until finally he was freed," Carlingal said. (See story on page A12.)

Carlingal also credited both the military and police operations for Bosst's safe release.

"Major operations in the area like Basilan and Sibugay helped in pressuring the kidnappers," he said. "In fact, some of the kidnappers gradually abandoned their captive, and operations helped a lot in his early release," Carlingal said.

Asked if Bosst had indeed been brought to Basilan, Carlingal said he did not know.

"What he told me was that from the time he was captured, only once did they travel by sea. The rest of his days in captivity was in the hinterlands, so I doubt if Bosst was brought to Basilan," Carlingal said.

Jonas NPA tag bolsters kin's fears; Army justifying disappearance

Troop says it's true. had a penchant for blaming the left for his older brother's disappearance, and that Tabunton's statement that Jonas is member of the New People's Army did cast some suspicion.

"General Tabunton is justifying the abduction of Jonas and is disorganizing the latter," JL, 33, said in a phone interview.

Jonas' younger brother Silin Burgos' view that Tabunton's statement bolstered the family's suspicion that the military had the motive for the abduction and to have been pulled off by a group of men and a woman at a Quezon City mall.

"There is a clear motive of the state to abduct Jonas," JL said of his 37-year-old brother, an agri-industrie working among peasants in Bulacan.

Tabunton told reporters on Thursday that Jonas was a member of the supposed NPA Front Committee 2 based in Bulacan. He said this was the finding of military investigators.

But JL said that with that kind of statement, Tabunton was not helping the Burgos family in its search for Jonas.

"We're looking for Jonas, and he's been missing for 83 days. The least Tabunton] can do is to help us find him. That's all we want," JL said.

The Burgoss have filed a habeas corpus petition at the Supreme Court and requested that it order the military to produce Jonas.

Army's proof

Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres, spokesperson of the Army, said they had documents and "credible" witnesses to link the claim that Jonas was a member of the NPA.

But Silin Burgos, widow of the press freedom icon Joe Burgos, told reporters that the military should present the supposed proof. But Torres said the Army could turn over what it had only to the proper investigating bodies.

Burgos said these disclosures by the army indicated that it was "laying the groundwork for a cover-up."

But JL said that even if his brother were a communist rebel, the military had no cause to abduct him.

"Even if it were true, does it justify the abduction of Jonas? Rapists, robbers and kidnappers, who committed heinous crimes, are given a day in court. If you're not given the chance, you should be given a day in court because we're in a democratic country," he said.

"That's why we have laws," he added, citing Article 3, Section 1 of the Bill of Rights, which states: "No person shall be deprived of life, liberty and property without due process of law, nor shall any person be denied of equal protection of the laws."

JL said that if the military has a case against Jonas, it should have taken him to court.

"Under the Revised Penal Code, we are presumed innocent until proven guilty," he said.

And Jonas is an activist, not a communist rebel, JL said, adding:

"What I know about the NPA rebel is that he operates outside of Metro Manila and he's armed. When Jonas was seized, he was at a restaurant in a mall and wasn't armed. There was no way he could be armed inside a mall."

JL said that when he and Jonas were in the watering hole Conspiracy Bar on Visayas Avenue in Quezon City a week before the latter's disappearance, his brother was not armed.

"He's an activist. How can they say he's an NPA rebel?" JL said.

Response to clamor

Torres said the Army disclosed the supposed information on Jonas in order to respond to the "public clamor" for the military to give the location of the activist's disappearance.

But in a separate interview, Edita Burgos said she had kept most of her sons' "irrelevant."

"They have no papers to prove that he is a member of the NPA. How could I know that, unless they can prove it, what they did was right?"

Pressing on that this was the third time Tabunton had spoken about her son's alleged ties with the NPA, Burgos said the military appeared to be "laying the groundwork for another assassination."

Tabunton that is, I mind you that whatever a person's background is, it's irrelevant. What they did is against the law," she said.

She also said it was "so easy for people to label (other) people, but they're not supporting their statements."

She added that what the Army needed to answer now was the question of Jonas' whereabouts.

'Demonization'

The militant Bilisang Mag-babaldd ng Pilipinas (BMP) expressed appreciation with the Burgos family's views.

"The AFP's demonization of Jonas is a desperate attempt to justify his abduction. General Tabunton and company are really getting desperate in finding an alibi to escape blame and punishment," BMP chair Rafael Mariano said in a statement.

Mariano also said Tabunton's "grossly malicious statement" had added insult to injury.

KMU secretary general Sandra Linares agreed: "Does it mean that if you are an NPA member, the military can just abduct, torture and kill you? This seems to be the line of reasoning that General Tabunton would like to impress upon us. It is no wonder that he has no regard for human rights."

Red Lancer's owner

As the National Bureau of Investigation, Regional Director Reynaldo Lacaba said he knows of no owner of the vehicles allegedly used in Jonas' abduction had presented to help in the probe.

Lacaba, head of the NBI Region, at Capitol Region, said Renato Alvarez, an overseas Filipino worker from Bataan's city, would be invited to shed light on the matter on the ownership of a red box-type Mitsubishi Lancer [MNM 331].

Upon verification with the Land Transportation Office, [we found] that the car—allegedly one of vehicles used in the abduction of Burgos—was registered under his (Alfaro's) name," Lacaba told reporters.

Lacaba said Alfaro was "willing to take the [to determine who, I] needed."

He quoted Alfaro as saying that "he had no affiliation with any organization, and had no idea why his car was being linked to the case."

An informant had earlier told the authorities that a man by the city Abis with them in the NBI. It was a staff car assigned to Ts-hortelus, the army chief—a claim that Tabunton denied. With a report from Tina G. Santos

BSP worried as peso hits 7-year high of 44.80 to US$

From page A1

ocean volatility," he said in a text message to this reporter, echoing comments he made in Asia.

Since the start of the year, the peso has appreciated by close to 6 percent against the US dollar, making it the second-best performing currency in Asia this year against the dollar. It has fared 9.44 percent, compared with the Indian rupee's 9.76 percent climb.

The peso opened yesterday at 44.89, down the psychological resistance of 45 that was also breached the previous day.

Trading at the PSE was brisk with $317 million changing hands.

"The peso is buoyed by equity-related inflows and is moving up against the US dollar like the other regional currencies," Tetangco said.

No currency control

Earlier this week, Alistair Bruce Limprasert $221 million in the biggest initial public offering (IPO) so far this year.

Broadcaster GMA Network Inc. is expected to raise $179 million in an IPO later this month and property developer Vista Land & Lifescapes will soon be making the country's biggest secondary share issue of around $400 million.

According to traders, the peso was also buoyed by comments made earlier by Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves, who proclaimed that the peso's value would continue to rise on the back of strong macroeconomic fundamentals.

But the finance chief ruled out any form of currency controls to influence the peso to go in that direction, adding to the bullish sentiment.

BSBC treasurer Jose Amalio Ybiosa said the local currency may appreciate further, but said that any rapid appreciation would be followed by reversal.

"If you see the sustained increase it's supply and demand," he said, explaining that it was primarily dollar inflows meant to participate in initial public offerings in the stock market that are forcing the peso higher.

Ybiosa cautioned with the central bank's assessment of the risks related to the recent rapid appreciation.

"The speed of the rate causes instabilities in transactions of importers," he said. In particular, rapid appreciation of the currency may lead to businessmen overhedging a deal at a certain price only to be confronted with a different exchange rate when the time comes to settle the payment.

"Sudden appreciation is hurting," he said.

Traders said they expect the peso to test the $44.20-level next week, but not before a slight correction was issued for profit-taking.

Record OFW remittances

The peso has been climbing all year on the back of record overseas remittances from Filipinos working abroad and foreign portfolio inflows. This month's rally has been driven partly by foreign fund inflows into shares of four big local firms.

A view that the central bank would tolerate a higher peso and expectations of a widening current account surplus have also helped.

"I guess this will look good for the State of the Nation Address next week for the President. I have a remark they would intervene," a trader said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is due to deliver the address on Monday.

The BSP was suspected of buying dollars that eased on rush the peso's strength. If intervention from appear to done in the market, according traders.

Ito Alino, Tetangco said he was concerned that the peso's rise would cause volatility for outside investments and in an attempt to broke the currency's rise ascent.

Asst Governor of BSP Eias Ting Saycocsiw said Tetangco's view contained about the peso earlier stirs the direction of the peso and rather than introduce capital controls the monetary authority would continue to open up its capital accounts.

"The peso, they like it to change gradually volatility is in an appreciation or downtrend," said Lorenzo.

"They have rules, steps and there are continuing attempts to open the capital account, loosening requirements, allowing funds to go up. Their concern is expressed through these changes in foreign exchange policy."

Gains in Asia

The peso, Indonesian rupiah and Malaysian dinggit led the pesos in Asia, each rising between a quarter and half a percent, as investors over subprime mortgages joined the US dollar once more to rout woes against the euro and weighed on emerging markets.

Those worries stayed at the fore after Fed Chair Ben Bernanke said on Thursday losses on these subprime loans would hit $100 billion, and that the risks to consumer spending.

"That has become more A credit turmoil and raises more So there's some selling of dollars in Asia," said a trader in Singapore.

But a view that the dollar had already been sold aggressively—it has hit multi-year lows against high-yielding carries—holding and later this week...led markets to look elsewhere.

With a report from Reuters

CHIA ROLL: The peso has been climbing all year on the back of record overseas remittances from Filipinos working abroad and foreign portfolio inflows. This month's rally has been driven partly by foreign fund inflows into shares of four big local firms.

Firm in $250-M scam has no license, says SEC

From page A1

of email complaint.

"The problem with investigations like this is that the investors usually flock out once they get paid," Banzo said.

Last month, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) issued a warning against investing in foreign exchange trading schemes, saying that the promised returns can not significant risks which unsophisticated investors may be unaware of.

Both said the SEC and the BSP are working together to clamp down on foreign exchange trading scams, but admitted that their efforts were being hobbled by "roadblocks."

The central bank's rules said it had no jurisdiction over foreign exchange trading firms since the products they offered were not financial instruments under the strict sense of the word.

This prompted the SEC to secure jurisdiction over the forex trading business. But the SEC's regulatory power stayed stymied after the Supreme Court affirmed a decision of the lower courts, exempting the scam and dotcom offer against PIPC.

The PIPC case came to light when its general manager, Cristina Gonzalez-Tantoco, wrote the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) the other day, seeking help from the latter and by forcing the whereabouts of Lorie, the owner of Performance Investment Products Corp. in the British Virgin Islands (Performance Inc. worldwide, BVI).

Lorie is also president of PIPC, the local subsidiary of Performance Investment, BVI.

In her letter to the NBI, Tantoco said Lorie had "unlawfully taken the money" of Performance Investments BVI "to the great prejudice of its investors," including herself.

She asked the NBI to help in Lorie's arrest and to "retrieve the funds that he unlawfully took."

$40,000 minimum

PIPC investors were asked to invest a minimum of $40,000 each and asked to identify a pair of currencies where they would like to place their investments. They gain or lose from the appreciation or depreciation of the currencies transacted.

The firm guaranteed an average of 12 percent return per annum and profits were then wired to individual investors' accounts in different banks.

The past several weeks, however, investors failed to get their updates, prompting them to complain to the PIPC.

Early this week, investors were told that Lorie had absconded with their money and that the bank accounts which held them investments had been emptied and closed.

According to Tantoco, the real office PIPC employees went to contact the Performance Investment BVI office in Singapore and were told that the funds had been invested in firms different banks and that one account in Hong Kong had already been closed by Lorie.

She said only $2 million in investors' funds have been recovered.

Offices in Japan, India, China

Yesterday, Tantoco released a statement saying that Performance Investments' offices in Japan, India and China have also closed down.

She said that "investors of PIPC in Shanghai, India and Japan, also expressed alarm over the fate of their investments especially as the massive owner of the firm, the head of it, Lorie had apparently disappeared."

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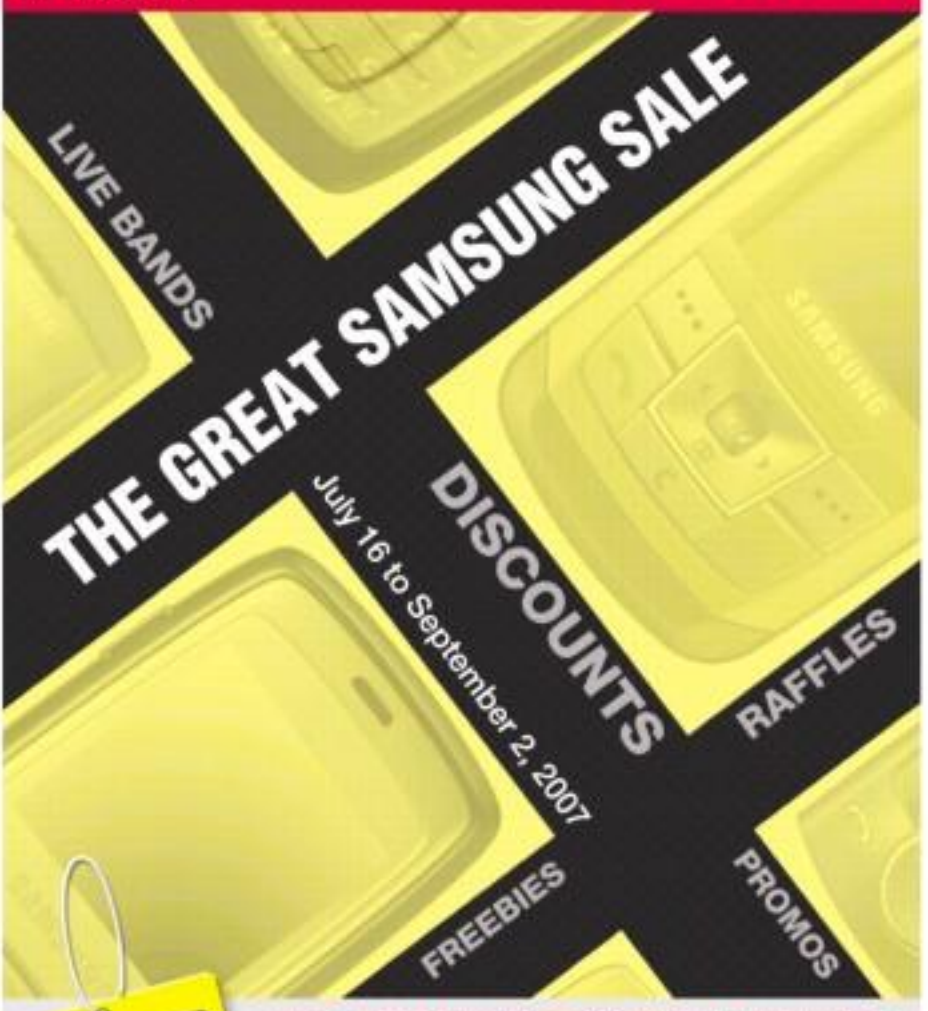

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NOT A SMOOTH SAILING All kinds of problems are being planned for Monday when President Arroyo delivers her State of the Nation Address. The new shipyard leader refer to Ms Arroyo's SONA in 2001 when she was busy with Pagasa storms, letters about their plight and headed there on a paper boat and set them sailing on the Pasig River hoping to reach Ms Arroyo's attention. RICHARD VISCONDE

Zamora to lead House opposition

By Norman Bordadora

SAN JUAN REP. RONALDO ZAMORA will be leading the opposition in the House of Representatives in the new Congress as he contenders for speakership in the majority coalition have agreed to allow an amendment to the rules so that opposition members can vote for the minority leader from among themselves.

Under existing House rules, the second placer in the speakership race automatically becomes the minority leader.

But opposing legislators said Speaker Jose de Venecia and Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, who are heading for the speakership, have given a guarantee that the opposition would be able to vote separately for the minority leader after the speakership vote on Monday.

Opposition members said they have reached a consensus to choose Zamora, a former executive secretary of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Consensus

"The choice was made as early as Wednesday. The three contenders reached a consensus among themselves and that consensus was presented to the members of the minority," said one opposition member.

"It's confirmed. We chose Hermie Zamora as the minority leader," another opposition lawmaker said.

Pablo Jan 16 or so members in the House, the opposition has conceded the majority positions to the administration coalition which has almost 200 lawmakers.

But it (here) say chance for the opposition to finish second in the speakership fight as De Venecia's Lakas party has about 100 members while Garcia's Kampi has more than 50.

The opposition is therefore pushing for an amendment to the rules that would allow the opposition to vote separately for the majority leader.

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"We'll make the announcement at the proper time," Cebu said in a news conference after a session of the Club Filipino yesterday.

Zamora attended the caucus but left without speaking to reporters before the news conference started.

Why no Sona, if there's ...

From page A1

dispute, either on her side or his.

House positions all vacant

In the last Congress ended on June 30, all positions in the House are vacant.

Rodriguez said that under those circumstances it would be improper for the President to address Congress on "their will be no House of Representatives to address."

However, Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, the outgoing majority leader, has said it would be "clear to everyone" for the Arroyo not to be able to elect a Speaker in time for the President's Sona at 4 p.m. on Monday.

But if worst comes to worst, a congressman could be designated to act as the chamber's presiding officer, "but that's not even thinkable," said Nograles, who's also a lawyer.

The post to being vacated by outgoing Speaker Jose de Venecia of Lakas and Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia of Kampi, who are both from the majority coalition.

Viva voce or secret voting?

The last major also-differ on how the election, scheduled for the morning of Monday, should be conducted.

De Venecia said his party wants it done viva voce, according to existing House rules.

The Garcia camp is proposing an amendment to the rules, one that will allow a secret vote, ostensibly to ensure that members are able to vote independently, without fear of reprisal or of offending colleagues.

Opposition lawmakers, who feel it's a ploy on the Club Filipino president, said the decision over how to proceed with the election could cut up the time after the opening on Monday rendering it a failure to elect a leader in time for the Sona.

"We are very concerned because there is a strong possibility that the previous scenario will be looking at a leaderless majority quarreling among themselves," said Palawan Rep. Rodolfo Gelez, who called on the majority coalition to get its act together and make a decision on who should be Speaker over the weekend.

GMA to step in

"This is the first time we have a situation like this ... the President may not be able to deliver her Sona," Gelez said.

Gelez said even if the House were to opt to appoint an interim Speaker, that decision could also take time.

But party-list lawmaker Rep. Crispin Beltran believes Mr. Arroyo should count only on one and only De Venecia between De Venecia and Garcia, "inevitably" choosing De Venecia.

Beltran said his stance has kept his contacts to let them do this long as a "means to ensure more promises to the Ombudsman that there will be no backfire in the passage of Malacañang's priority measures in the 14th Congress."

"If a deal occurs that Malacañang will not allow the speakership race unsettled before Monday," when the President delivers her Sona, he said.

Beltran said Malacañang cannot afford to allow a "Speakerless" scenario on Sona day as "this will further expose the administration to genuine political crisis."

Bitter exchanges

The bitter exchanges between the warring De Venecia and Garcia camps continued yesterday.

Manuel Rep. Amado Bagtasing, a member of Kampi and a Garcia ally, reiterated that De Venecia's pronouncements over a midnight deal between Arroyo and Garcia "all but confirmed that De Venecia does not have the numbers to win a fifth term as House leader."

"This statement in no wavering proceed by De Venecia shows that he is panicking, that he does not have the support of 190 or so congressmen as he claims," Bagtasing said.

Bagtasing said the House has been severely damaged as an institution during De Venecia's 12 years as Speaker. A new Speaker is needed so the House can move ahead, he said.

He claimed that lawmakers from several other parties like the Nacionalista Peoples Coalition (NPC), Nacionalista Party (NP), Liberal Party, and some from the ruling Lakas-CMD and the opposition were for secret balloting.

GMA body language

An ally of De Venecia's on the other hand said the President has cast her lot with De Venecia, which she supposedly showed when she attended a dinner hosted by the Speaker for incoming House members on Thursday.

"Even without the above-mentioned speeches and statements, the President showed clearly that [De Venecia] has her blessings," said Iloilo City Rep. Raul del Mar.

"Her body language says it all," Del Mar said. With a report from Christine T. Figueroa

Senior moment for Lim ...

From page A1

Manila," expressing exercise in yesterday's meeting of the Metro Manila Mayors League.

"They can't just keep asks people's homes without an access statement," he said in the conclusion of fellow mayors and journalists.

Slowly is his theme. The 77 year-old Lim was talking about "icons," the Japanese word-base promise of "coming" in rounding up the terrible incommensurables in search of supposed dividends.

Lim was about to consume his remarks when Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay whispered to his ear that the question was actually about Pete Sevilla Mayor's speech in front of the Makati Address Series on Monday.

Laughter rang out in Lim, making his attitude, shifted his attention to the subject at hand.

Japanese era

"Were here, it is unsatisfactory pending up Binay. (That's because you weren't even born during the Japanese era)," Binay joked afterward.

Binay was all in silent step from of the Nation Address? (He's think I didn't know about the Metro of the Nation Address?) On the statement in the woman. Assigning reporters (Self you up still being protected up to now?" Lim remarked gamely.

Only seven of 17 mayors showed up to session's meeting: Binay, Lim, Pineda de Tinsulat of Pasay, JV Ejercito of San Juan, Tobias Tiangco of Navotas, Alfredo Lim Belen of Mandaluyong and James Medina of Pateros.

Binay said they decided to meet in order to fill the void left by the previous league's president, Quezon Mayor Sonny Belmonte, who was recently appointed interior secretary.

The meeting was held at the Makati City Hall. And since they lacked a quorum, Binay said they would just hold executive committee which affect Metro Manila.

President's prerogative

During the press conference, the mayors were asked questions on several national issues.

For instance, they were asked to comment on Arroyo's appointment to head the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Most agreed that was the President's prerogative.

"Good luck and best wishes to him. It's a big job. Right now, we can't question the President's appointment until Lim (Attorney) actually performs his job," Trinidad said. "Like they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating."

The mayors were also asked about the lifting of the ceasefire of kidnapped Italian missionary Giancarlo Bossi who is expected from days before the President's Sona.

"We'll all be speculating about what she'll be saying, but we hope she will finally address issues like the extrajudicial killings of militants, media and people from the opposition, Binay said.

Counter-Sona

Militant and opposition groups would be holding a "counter-Sona," to answer the "feel good" statements that they were expecting in the President's speech.

For his part, Lim said he thought the Sona seems to be a genuine accomplishment of those who organized for the point's release.

Binay, however, said: "If he was rescued, that could be a real accomplishment. Just be sure released."

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INQUIRER

OPINION

Spiked

EDITORIAL

FORGET ABOUT THAT STORY ABOUT SUPAO filled with cardboard mixed with meat. That has been exposed as a cheap scare pulled off by a freelance television reporter, who has since been detained by Chinese authorities. But not those chewy White Rabbit Creamy Candies, or at least not yet, even if the Chinese manufacturer swears by its products and threatens to sue the local Bureau of Food and Drugs for banning their sale.

The BFAD earlier this week ordered a stop to the importation and sale of the White Rabbit candies made by Guan Sheng Yuan Group Co., the Milk Candies of Romanticfish Food Industry Co., the grape biscuits of Dongguan Baitong Foodstuff Co. and Dongguan Fangliang Food Co. The BFAD said tests done on samples of these candies and biscuits imported from China indicated that they contained formaldehyde, a preservative often used by embalmers. It ordered distributors and retailers of these products to take them off the shelves within 30 days. Prolonged use of the chemical could lead to cancer of the lungs, according to health experts.

The manager of the candy-making firm, however, said independent tests had yielded no traces of the chemical. "Our products have passed tests to the strict standards," he said.

Maybe. But those White Rabbit candies were among more than 800 products imported from China being tested for contamination by the agency, and they were among the only four found to be laced with formaldehyde so far. So, why would the agency single out these particular candies and cookies for banning?

The fact is that thousands of Chinese products are now under the microscope in many countries, not only for shoddy workmanship but also for shady manufacturing practices that could prove harmful, if not fatal, to consumers. Questions about the quality of Chinese exports started to crop up after American contractors complained about the poor performance of products in China. Then, a total of 36 cats and dogs were reported to have died in the United States after being fed with pet foods imported from China. Tests later showed that the pet foods contained melamine, a substance used in lamination and adhesive materials.

Far worse was what happened in Panama, where 83 persons died from poisoning after drinking Chinese-made cough preparations. The medicines were found to contain diethylene glycol, a material used in refrigeration and air-conditioning. Ingestion of the chemical leads to kidney and liver damage.

Diethylene glycol has also been found in Chinese-made toothpaste sold locally, according to the BFAD. The sale of toothpaste from China is now prohibited in North and South America.

The situation is much worse inside China. Newsweek in a recent article quoted an Asian Development Bank estimate putting at 300 million the number of Chinese suffering from food poisoning every year. The magazine also reported several horror stories told by Chinese consumer advocates about food additives that lowered men's sperm counts, soy sauce containing arsenic, and fast-foods spiked with hormones that resulted in 8-year-old boys growing facial hair, and 7-year-old girls developing breasts. Tainted infant formula has also been blamed for the death of at least 50 babies and left 200 others malnourished, Newsweek reported.

To their credit, Chinese officials seem to be keenly aware of the problem and are moving to address it. The Chinese agency tasked with ensuring product quality and safety has said that from December last year up to May this year, it had shut down 180 factories after discovering 23,000 food products that were either substandard or tainted with harmful chemicals. And as if to show how serious it is about enforcing quality standards, the Chinese government executed last week the first chief of the Chinese State Food and Drug Administration for approving the sale of fake medicines in exchange for bribes.

Chinese authorities say they have made significant headway in enforcing quality standards, noting that the proportion of products that passed recently was the highest ever. An earlier government survey showed that less than 1 percent of food exported—but 20 percent of products sold in the domestic market—was substandard.

But a 99 percent passing mark is not good enough, especially when it comes to food. Indeed it should serve notice both to Philippine regulatory agencies and to the buying public to be doubly wary about buying Chinese foods, medicines, toothpaste and similar products. Until such imports are cleared locally, the rule should be: Better safe than sorry.

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The memoirs of Geronimo Z. Velasco

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

PHILIPPINE ADMINISTRATIONS LOVE TO ANchor their legitimacy on the total demonization of regime regime. They invariably need to paint the previous regime as the very incarnation of evil, thereby finding their corrupt to the core, and preferring to dismantle everything. Our political memory is shorter on evil than it is on glorious history.

We have, for instance, succeeded in depicting the 14 years of the Marcos dictatorship as the darkest moment in our nation's history. It is portrayed to be remembered singularly for its unparalleled corruption, oppressiveness and venality. And yet, strangely enough, successive post-Edsa governments chose to retain many primary executive and legislative functions, virtually without modifying, in effect, the structure of an authoritarian state system. Presidential Decree 1177, which requires appropriations for debt service from non-presidential activities and sectors, is one of them.

Certainly we should never forget the many instances of misuse of state power exercised by the regime in the name of security and development. But we would never understand the persistence of authoritarian regimes if we saw them as standing solely on a platform of terror, torturing, killing and "salting" their enemies mostly keeping in close dramatic regime—one side of Imelda Marcos' 5,000 pairs of shoes?

Those recurring thoughts visited me again on the other day when I watched on that former classmate of mine, Geronimo Velasco, had died. He was one of the brightest minds in the Marcos Cabinet, a technocrat who set the country's quest for energy self-reliance from the early '70s until the collapse of the Marcos regime in the mid-'80s. He witnessed from public life of the '90s, survived three presidents, serving his successor and playing his cello. It shared business the inside brought us together in 2001, and we quickly became good friends. He had read my critique of the Marcos years and was keen to offer his comments. It was customary to know what I was like to work with Marcos. Our conversations prompted him to publish his memoirs into a book, "Full Hearing: The Quest for Energy Self-Reliance" (Anvil, 2006).

This book will disappoint those who are looking for more reasons to flog a regime we overthrew 21 years ago. That is not a bad thing and will account, on an issue many of the reader get that was supposed to be Malacañang in those heady days of the campaign documentary. There are not the confessions of a former bully-wielding or authorities himself. There are the notes of a willful technocrat who refuses to compromise principles and values in the face of pressures. For Ramon Mitra, there is nothing gratifying about being present right when the seats of repeated mistakes are to be borne by successive generations.

Those are the reflections of someone who sees more clearly with enough powers so he could put together a modern and self-reliant energy infrastructure that is essential to any nation's economic development. He is appreciative of how the profitable state corporations he helped establish have been (or continued after 1986, then pronounced dysfunctional, and finally were sold to foreign buyers.

He argues the case for nuclear power with such clarity that, on reading his book, I had to remind myself that the nuclear plant of my own youthful opposition to the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP) in the 1970s. He believes that the energies of corruption that plagued the project, justified to their worst, so clouded the air that it became impossible to think objectively about nuclear power and its options. He feels that it never was fatally swamped by politics at every turn, he is convinced that nuclear energy remains a viable alternative to fossil fuel, and has become more so in the light of the recent phenomenal rise in crude oil prices.

Instead of signalling the country's leap to modernity, the BNPP, which was for him, became the symbol of everything that was corrupt and wrong about the Marcos regime. Its powerful was the imagery of the plant as a tomb monument to a dictator's folly that it became impossible for the Aquino government to do anything with it, except to mothball it. Now, an estimated $2.1 billion over a 30-year period to pay for the plant, and now we were going to pay it in the future. Then in the same breath we would tell our children we were going to foster all the debts incurred during the Marcos regime—to borrow the regime and its hirings suggests, "What's the commissioner there?" Velasco asks.

The plant was ready to fire; the fuel rods had been delivered, but for a storage, last minute design flaws in the containment to take a final look at the site, the plant would have been immediately operational by December 1985. The $26 engagement it was exposed to prisoners would have fulfilled the country's goals to bring down dependence on imported oil to 50 percent by 1988.

Velasco argues that the BNPP supplies the price motivation, the safety features of the plant and the meticulous training of Filipino personnel to operate the plant and handle emergencies. It becomes few doubt to take up the issue of corruption. Moreover, he agrees also that role of the Atlanta Daniel also hindered the deal. The contract with Westinghouse was signed in Marcos' 1976 Bikanon Whence was just in charge of the project on October 1977.

A more complete account of the Marcos years will have to wait for the kind of scrutiny that Velasco tells in his book. Those years were not all about primitive accumulation through corruption. They were also about the painful attempts of ambitious public servants to expand the country's productive base and build an economy based on modern industry and technology.

Comments: n.public.lives@gmail.com

Tax amnesty bill's 'quiet' passage into law

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IT TOOK THREE NINE YEARS, BUT THEY DID it. Then finally succeeded in pushing a tax amnesty bill into law. And it was so quietly (the three senators who voted may be "invisible") done that I didn't even see it until I came across one of the newspapers a couple of days ago—the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the tax amnesty law are already being prepared and will be released very soon.

By "they," of course, I mean the lawmakers of the land who wanted the law in the first place. And, apparently, they got the essence of otherwise irrational senators from both administration and opposition rank as John Arroyo, Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon Revilla, Jinggoy Estrada, Lito Lapid, Rodolfo Biazon and Edgardo Angara (they all signed). Ironically, Senator "Bong" Revilla Jr., who had authored his own version of a tax amnesty bill, dissented. Not that "Jinggoy" formula signed the bill, although with "reservations"; Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago voted "yes" with the notation "duly entered." I still have to find out from Senator why he, who almost single-handedly started off the tax amnesty moves in 2006, finally agreed to.

But today's final tax amnesty bill contains items which failed in previous attempts? There were at least three factors that might have contributed to its passage. First, the bill seemed to have been supported by some very important businessmen, who stood to gain a lot from the amnesty provisions. Couples this fact with the matter of timing: 2007 being an election year, those in Congress who would have normally fought the tax amnesty tooth and nail might have been too busy focusing on their campaigns to do battle. Or, as might have been suspected, finding so much (with businessmen) ready and willing to help for repaid pre-quid that they willingly sacrificed their principles.

At the same time, members of the media, who (quite understandably) under normal circumstances would have been all over the tax amnesty bill with a fine-tooth comb, had too many other and scant, issues to report on and analyze.

(Continued on page A13)

Even cursory is that the Bureau of Internal Revenue also expressed concern with the final version of the amended tax amnesty bill—I don't know whether the agency also asked for a veto—and estimated the forgone effect on its potential collectibles. For example, as of Dec. 31, 2006, the tax amnesty covers the taxable year 2005 and prior years), the BIR estimated that the tax amnesty would yield only P5.5 billion over a period of five years, the bill's amnesty tax amendments amounting to P96 billion were so small of the tax amnesty, it would be able to collect at most P6 billion, versus the P130 billion to P150 billion it would collect under normal circumstances.

The BIR also estimates that the same thing would happen with cases involving disputed assessments now pending in the courts, all involving a total of P71 billion. The tax amnesty, it says, would result in a total collection of close to P12 billion only.

But if both the DOF and the BIR were against the bill, why did it even get certified in the first place? Two reasons: one is that a general tax amnesty was part of the President's 2004 focus, and second, the measure is "politically good," in budget parlance. And the other was that they had put "salary loss" in the original version of the bill, which, they hoped, would maximize the gain and minimize the loss.

But, as usual, the revision has duly produced gross unanticipated beyond recognition in the finance, the House, and finally in the "third chamber," the bicameral committee, had to "declassify" everybody was out caught up in his own problems to note.

We another example of the economic good being sacrificed for political interests. Another example of tax-paying Juan de la Cruz getting the short end of the stick in favor of the cheats and evaders—with no more white knights in the House to save the day.

Let's hope the BIR manages to save part of the situation.

Voices of Filipino businesses on corruption

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

BEFORE HUTCHCROFT SUPPRESSED BUTTANDYANNEY International's annual cross-country index of corruption—the one that recently caused the Philippines to rise in the most corrupt list the world—we should be aware that the ratings reverse others very strongly on opinions of experienced executives of foreign firms in the countries being ordered.

Those expert-type opinions are extracted from surveys borne periodically unto by international consulting firms to their business clientele, and they usually deal with very many factors—corruption is only one of them—affecting a country's business climate. TI has no agreement with those consulting firms; it can have no access to their data for commenting to international expert-types. Indeed, as I understand it, those firms are free to release

Actions speak louder than ads

EVERY TIME I TURN ON MY TELEVISION or other office broadcast, I always see government officials and employees who have been suspended or removed from office because of unexplained wealth and graft and corruption. But has it bothered the millions of poor that the perpetrators illegally acquired it? No! I suspect that the Office of the Ombudsman gets a share of the ill-gotten wealth which should be ploughed in favor of the government in summary proceedings.

2. In a TV commercial, one of the right services the government renders to its citizens is health care. But when you go to public hospitals in Metro Manila and search for prescription, you see none of them, or even first, realigned generous-occupying market.

3. In education, which you get in public schools, you see 7 9 up to 90 high school or elementary students in a classroom. How can the student be the people's education?

4. The Land Transportation Office and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board are encouraging passengers to report overloaded public utility vehicles as well as taxi drivers who refuse to take in passengers. But complaints regarding such violations are not acted upon, thus discouraging passengers.

5. In the war against illegal drugs, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and other police agencies transport their achievements, like when they are able to confiscate drugs and cash confiscations worth millions, if not billions of pesos. But do they destroy these items in accordance with Republic Act 9165 (Comprehensive Anti-Drug Law)? Could it be that they themselves are "recycling" cash illegally?

I say to the Arroyo administration: cure the adverse image immediately. Just do your job honestly, conscientiously and efficiently, and your accomplishments will speak for themselves.

—PROCOPIO M. BELTRAN JR., president emeritus, Philippine Trial Lawyers Association (pmbeltran2000@yahoo.com)

Formal attire for formal functions, why not for Mass?

MANY PEOPLE ARE SADDENED by the "trivialization" of the significance of proper attire for Masses, says Antonio Ferial, in his July 1 column, kindly observed that "we're certainly wore a long way from the days we took pains with our Sunday outfits, dressing up in fully party dresses or Boy-scout white habits with blue sashes to those days when everyone in church seems dressed for a picnic, or a beach party."

And yesterday—shouldn't we be distanced that Misa-goers have "ventured" out highest from of worship to a "beach party"? The dress code is natural to help us recognize the need and presence of God who comes to us in the lowly appearance of bread and wine. We should be urged to participate in this radiant banquet.

No one questions usual norms that prescribe dress codes for weddings, diplomatic dinners, inauguration ceremonies and the like. Even "classy" notions such demand appropriate attire befitting a carnival. Formal, conference, details of dress-less think how formal unless, and lady wishes wear black, long-sleeved dresses for an audience with the Pope. Shouldn't we also respond to God's personal invitation—to be with us and even to dwell to us—with the greatest care and respect?

Such decisions makes as we prepare the real presence of us almighty Creator and living Father in every Mass. Our priests help us to be predisposed to this gift of faith—if we could only heed their advice.

—THERESE SPESSOSA, (ggjm@yahoo.com)

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LETTERS

What's OIC's stand on Basilan ambush?

AFTER THE RECENT KILLING OF 14 Marines in Basilan, I've been following news related to it through the Internet. Where the hell is interim Muslim." "The slain soldiers were their host." "Shoot me the terrorists."). The rebels made me feel really sorry for the misconduct and the suffering.

I grieve with the families left by the fallen soldiers. I can't imagine how I would have reacted if I had been one of the relatives of the dead soldiers. (True, taking their love for the Filipino people was part of their job; but they're living in denial to comfort by them our mind.)

According to the reports, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf were behind the ambush. As for the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, should denounce the barbaric acts of those who unleashed and murdered the soldiers.

I'll support a retaliatory strike against the killers. I hope the government will also go after those who are behind the selling of government's armaments and ammunitions to the rebels. I salute those who are fighting and those who died fighting for freedom from terrorists.

—CORDOVA DELA CELLA (dr_cmcm@yahoo.com)

Alumnae against Mendiola rallies

"LOOK SHOCKING!"

That was the reaction of the students, faculty and alumnae of the College of the Holy Spirit Mendiola. In CHSM when Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim announced on TV that the school was closing down, alarmed parents rushed to verify if this was true...that the school, which is nearing its centenary, is closing down.

How sad that Mayor Lim should act up on his kind of senseless, rabid hostility and only our institution but also the other landmarks of education in Mendiola, such as Arts Bel-Air College, Centro Escolar University and La Consolacion, all of which are still struggling to overcome the public perception of Mendiola as "rally hot-den."

There was a character and positive change when Alfredo Lim was inaugurated as Mayor. Mendiola, he who is now Lim announced, it would change its reputation dramatically...Mendiola, as we were shocked.

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—CORDOVA DELA CELLA (dr_cmcm@yahoo.com)

May we invite the mayor to our campus so that he'll get to see our students at work? It would be interesting to see his design and advertising art, as well as our nursing department's hospital training course; and so that he'll appreciate what goes on behind our gates!

The CHSM Alumnae Foundation is challenging its present to Mayor Lim: let's please let the "2008 Shrine-ning." We pray that the Holy Spirit guides the mayor in all his future decisions and actions so that he will not be a deterrent to what the school is trying fast to maintain: good education and values based on spiritual values.

On behalf of CHSM president Amalia Bolinao, we, the CHS alumnae, invite Mayor Lim to a dialogue.

—LOIS T. GERVOSO, president, College of the Holy Spirit Alumnae Foundation, Apo cor@globe.dd.net

Territorial integrity non-negotiable

WE CAN'T CEDE OUR ASSETS to Korea patrol or take offshore areas that are "controlled" by major economies? Why, despite the assurance, should soldiers be killed, beheaded and mutilated? If one of the soldiers were your husband, would you like it to have to hold peace talks?

This is one country. One nation. If there are gangs or individuals who would challenge this country and say they own a certain part of the land and that they have the right to use themselves and kill anybody who enters that part of the land, then they should be exterminated.

I hope our Commander-in-Chief puts an end to the folly of finding excuses for every life we lose in Mindanao. I hope that our Peace Panel finds the way to negotiate that we remain one country. That is non-negotiable.

—RUEL CARPIO, Barangay Bunsuy Tenan, Quezon City

Stay away from the Philippines

I TOTALLY AGREE WITH ALLAN A. Rufo's reaction to the letter of Eugenio Desiderio Fuang of Bora Park, Dagupan, 7/19/07).

If Young cannot stand the inconvenience she experienced when she visited the Philippines, she should not come back here.

—GILBERT TINGL, hotrice@yahoo.com

Student confident of congressmen's judgment

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE COLUMN OF John Bocy titled "URBL insurance system" (Inquirer, 7/17/07).

While it is true that in the past, the Price dent's preferred candidate for speaker won even in their interests when the House of Representatives was initially ruled by the opposition), this time it is different. President Macapagal-Arroyo has declared that she will stay neutral in the fight for the speakership and she should be true to her word.

John Bocy thinks Congress of Eugenio said Pimentel Jr., Juan Ponce Enrile, Jose De Venecia Jr. of Zaldivar, the five principal contenders for the speakership—as the 14th Congress opens...are both related allies of the President. I know, there is no need for her to assure me.

This is a point for our democracy since the legislature is mandated by the Constitution to be independent of the executive, and vice versa. The issue here is principle. The lump congressmen, headed by Garcia, want to introduce fundamental reforms in the management of the affairs of the House. They sound that under De Venecia as Speaker, the House got to invest citizens in the interests of the people, as shown by its past statutes.

In their confidence of support for Garcia, the Lumpy congressmen say are hoping for transparency and accountability in the deliberations of House funds; the assignment of committee chairmanships and other key posts on the basis of competence and qualifications (not cronyism and personal comfort zone); and reforms that is a potent instrument for the pursuit of the public good.

We hold that the congressmen they time will act on the basis of principle and on what they believe is good for the people.

—ALTHEA RAJON M. PELLAZAR, president, UST Central Student Council, University of the Visayas, Espeleta, Manila

HSA also a case of martial law exported

THE LATEST "MADE IN THE PHILIPPINES" export product is a repressive tool patterned after the decrees of US President George W. Bush's widely discredited "War on Terror." The US Arroyo regime's new antiterrorism law (Human Security Act of 2007) not only legalizes unified surveillance Philippine citizens, but also violates the Philippine Constitution.

The HSA's "arrest-without-application" under Sec. 30 makes it a double whammy for arrogant Filipinos already reeling abroad from a range of attacks on their human rights. We know from such reports as the yearly US State Department's report on human rights and so-called terrorist lists already implemented around the world, in the aftermath of US imperialism's so-called "global war on terror" to the United States, Japan, Burma, Italy and other countries, the criminalization of undocumented migrants makes many migrant communities vulnerable to the false impression that migrants may be likely terrorists, they are framed charges, arrested, interrogated and deported or imprisoned.

For Filipino overseas, the "arrest-without-application" of the HSA spotlights the utter lack of protection and security of migrants when it comes to the rights and welfare of migrant Filipinos. Under the HSA's rules on detention provision, the Arroyo regime places overseas Filipinos within its draconian reach—even as it benefits from their billions of dollars in remittances to prop up its economy. Instead of responsibility to guiding migrants who are exploited, maltreated, imprisoned and deported. As such, it is only just that migrant Filipinos and their families heighten their struggle against the anti-migrant Arroyo regime and against the anti-migrant of the Filipino people's forced migration.

The brutal reality that lurks in the Filipinos and migrants under the Arroyo regime illustrates that state terrorism is the true enemy of the people. The repressive measures act as it will a tool of state terrorism by the Arroyo regime. The HSA will unleash unbridled terror and violence on the fundamental rights of the Filipino people here and abroad.

As an alliance of progressive organizations composed of overseas Filipinos and their families, Migrante International strongly condemns the HSA as a draconian and fascist tool for state terrorism.

We call on international migrants to assess, organizing and mobilizing the broadest number of migrant Filipinos and their families against the HSA. We join the rising number of patriotic and progressive individuals and organizations calling for its immediate scrapping. Instead of securing the people's interests, the HSA spells further out subjugation and strengthens the control to silence and oppress the fascist Arroyo regime.

—CHONEL IRMA SAN AGUSTIN, chair, Migrante International, 611 14th Ave., Murphy Square, Cubao, Quezon City

eCard Plus to remain 'Minus' until December?

THANKS TO THE INQUIRER FOR HELPING readers' pensioners on their plights on the eCard Plus. The Inquirer's announcement that the eCard system by December. The eCard's "birthing" problems should be over by then.

But no, it seems, more accept changes, like those that come with technological advances. However, the eCard has to reckon pensioners still do not have access to computers and internet. It doesn't make for easy counter-checking of ATM receipts. I suggest that inquiry desks be set up in banks with ATM units and that old-age pensioners be given a special ATM lane.

Even before a pensioner receives his/her eCard, he/she is already identified, going to a designated regional GSIS office, accomplishing paper requirements, only to be told that we must then 99 persons can be accommodated for the day. Meaning, there will be another long trip to the GSIS office two days, thus a month-long wait for the eCard. Inquirer, please verify/assist, the above, although brief, confirmation of the expected three-month processing from January to March plus the 2000 bonus, and the subsequent three months of misery waiting for the "lump sum" that was ordered after three months.

Then, even for "operational" eCards, some ATMs limit the maximum withdrawal to P4,000, or amount which is grossly inadequate for the monthly needs of maintenance medication, dietary supplements, medical check-up and others.

Unfortunately, for the pensioner's ATM account, more withdrawals mean more "minus" (service fees).

Indeed, today's/our pensioners deserve legitimate services and concerned institutions. The eCard Plus should live up to its attractive name and not serve as if it were an eCard Minus.

—EDGAR S. GO, retired Southern Baptist, Cavite 4103

INQUIRER Visayas

HIGHLY (L-R) Francisco Gabriel, Elmer Tabuloc, Agapito Lovaria, Jose Francisco Loez, Abelardo Sobrado, Jose Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Davis Rio Tevares, Snipe in Roxas, Jr., Romulo Pasa, Ramon Angeles and Ramon Cuadras at the historic Magsa Church

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25 years of 'love, faith, and service'

By Ma. Dinah Labiano
Iloilo City

THIRTEEN PRIESTS CELEbrated the 25th anniversary of their ordination this year, proud that their batch, said to be the biggest in the archdiocese of Jaro, has weathered the demands and storms in their ministry.

On July 16, when the headliners were the lone auspicious, many of them were at the historic Molo Church to celebrate the Mass with one of their classmates, Undo Rio Tevares, who marked his 50th birthday and 25th year as a priest.

Jaro archbishop Angel Lagdameo, who is also the head of Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), could not help point out the irony during the occasion. Indirectly referring to the news on the P400-million settlement of clergy abuse cases in the archdiocese of Los Angeles, California, Lagdameo asked the faithful to pray for the priests and encourage their sons to become priests.

In his homily, CBCP secretary general Msgr. Juanito Figura described the priesthood today as one that is "wounded and struggling."

He said priests have left the priesthood because of the demands of celibacy and chastity. Some have left to join politics. Others were observed to have committed sex indiscretions of priests.

But Figura, who was also their teacher in the seminary, commended Bravo and his classmates for their 25 years "journey of faith, love and service."

Fr. Ramon Cuadras, the batch chronicler, said they studied March 20, 1982, so there were six thirteens days although they have separate ordinations in their hometowns.

Perfect score

"When it comes to what everyone was to be ordained, we say 'seventy,'" Cuadras said. "If this were a basketball game, we ran into the semi-finals and the score is 13-0."

Actually there were 14 of them in the batch but one died of cardiac arrest, only six years into the priesthood. He was Fr. Salvador Ibañez, a professor at Saint Vincent Ferrer Seminary in Jaro (also in Molo, Iloilo City, Bravo's 51).

The rest plodded and experienced hunger, poverty, sickness, rejection and close call, said Cuadras.

In the Jaro archdiocese, their batch was recognized for building parishes in far-flung villages and for having reached the limes of mine.

Antonio Bravo is Father Salgado Bravo Jr., who founded the parish of Santo Tomas in Iloilo City, and is now the parish priest of San Rafael town. He built from Concepcion town in 1992, while riding his motorbike at around 10 p.m., missed seeing that big rock in the road and dragged from 200 meters from where he fell and left him for dead. But he was able to crawl back to the main road where he was rescued and saved his new life. He has remaining but was healed.

Undo Rio, the parochial vicar of Miraflores, is also the secretary of the archdiocese of Jaro. He was the only one, and his family hails from Cebu town. For 12 years he was the personal secretary of the late archbishop Alfredo Flamiano. He helped organize the 1986 peace talks between the government and local communist leaders Cooks reunion between and the late Fr. Ernesto Rosa.

Fr. Francisco Gabriel, a native of Leon, is presently priest of Miagao, Iloilo. He is the singer and musical director of the class. He founded the Parish of Miraculous Medal in Sarangani Colony, Mlagao.

Fr. Jose Francisco Loez is the parish priest of Concepcion. An only son, he entered the seminary in high school. He grew up in Lopez town. He is an all-around priest—driver, mechanic and electrician. He was assigned to many poor parishes and he got by because of hard work, compassion and resourcefulness.

Fr. Agapito Lovaria is a native of Cambanaya town and is now assigned to Ivisan, Iloilo. He founded the parish of Sabagan, a far-flung village in Passi City. He was a singer and entered the seminary in high school. He is known for cooking his specialties.

Now an archdeacon in Texas, in the United States, Fr. Benjamin Molina hails from Mexico town. Among his classmates, he was assigned to The deepest number of parishes in the archdiocese of Jaro.

Family

A native of Calinog, Fr. Romulo Pasa is the parish priest of Lemery, San Joaquin town. After college, he taught in several schools and entered Saint Vincent Ferrer Seminary for priesthood. He founded the Parish of St. Joseph in Lutac, Barotac Nuevo as Ajuy town. He is known as a good teacher and school administrator.

Born in Hinoba-an, Canada with his family is Fr. Dominic Perrales, who grew up in Ilo-ilo. He is assigned as priest in Bono parish in Miraflores.

Also elected is Fr. Rudyfelix Penaga is from San Joaquin town. He is now assigned in the Diocese of Northville Center in New York. He earned his doctorate in catechetics in Rome.

Currently assigned in the assistant parish priest and parochial vicar in Oton is Fr. Rosvico Inquito, noted for his skills as a preacher. He is into charismatic renewal groups. He hails from Barotac Viejo.

A native of New Lucena town, Fr. Abelardo Sobrado is now the parish priest of San Rafael. He is the youngest among his classmates and is known for being hardworking and self-effacing.

Fr. Elmer Tabuloc, who hails from Sabagan town, is now the priest of Ugong, a parish he founded in Pototan town. He was said to have accepted many difficult assignments entrusted to his prayerful, generous and simple.

Fr. Undo Rio Tevares, a native of Miagao town, is the parish priest of Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo City. He teaches at the seminary and is a school administrator. He earned his doctorate in Sacred Theology from Antonio, Manila.

Cuadras said the secret of staying in the ministry a priest. He cheer classmates to each other.

"The are a family and our classmate's family is everyone's family. But all suppose each other in many ways," he said.

Because of age and health problems nowadays, they seek to free lighter assignments but they said that if they have a chance to do it over again, they would still become priests.

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Across the NATION

4 Sayyaf men bolt Basilan jail after release of Bossi

The escaped Abu Sayyaf members were 'high-value targets...'

ZAMBOANGA CITY—AT LEAST 16 inmates, including four suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits, escaped from the Basilan provincial jail in Isabela City around 2 a.m. yesterday, shortly after Italian priest Giuseppe Bossi was freed from captivity, police and military officials said.

Brig. Gen. Ramiro Mora, commander of the 1st Marine Brigade in the province, said the escapees numbered 20 but one pulls of their cells.

Senior Supt. Angelito Casimiro, provincial police chief of the PNP in Western Mindanao, said among those who escaped were four members of the Abu Sayyaf, who had been used for various offenses.

Casimiro did not identify the bandits but said "they were high value targets."

Jamodin Sali, Basilan jail warden, identified the four escaped bandits as Ismig Asbulani, Ilyas Isnaji, Abing Hasipang and Wakid Hasipang.

An Muslim source named The Inquirer the captives as Ilyas Mundos, Ismang Isnaji, Gapor Isnaji, Ismaelhasan Sali, Hamsali Hasipang, Eric Ajilun, Nasir Abdull, Jun Jeppil, Jimbit Hassan, Ibrahim Mundol, Hassin Ajilun and Mare Lotip.

It was not immediately known what costs the other escapees were facing.

Asked how the escape took place, Sali said he is unable to disclose details because the CCTV cameras 11 and 12 aimed a sharp object in cutting down the window grills.

HOOVER Left is the 1st Marine Battalion soldier in Patikul, Basilan to go after those who killed 14 of their comrades in ambush last week.

"They are now subject to investigation why these inmates were able to escape without undergo it and they will immediately be relieved from service," Sali said.

On April 16, 2004, 32 inmates—including several Abu Sayyaf bandits—also bolted the Basilan provincial jail.

Nine of the inmates were killed during patrol operations while nine others had been recaptured.

Among those still at large is Abu Shark, a notorious Abu Sayyaf bandit involved in various kidnapping cases in Western Mindanao.

Police said rewards had been sent to help police run after the escapees.

By mid or of last yesterday afternoon, none of the escapees had been sighted yet.

A PNP report quoted Jamodi Sali, warden of the jail, as saying only four guards were on duty at the time of the escape.

Provincial jails are under the supervision of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP). —Jade Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao with a report from Alyssa Papa in Manila

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CEBU PACIFIC

Former leftist group leader gunned down

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

DAGUPAN CITY—A FORMER LEFTIST ACtivist turned police asset was gunned down early yesterday here.

Rogelio Rivera, former leader of the peasant group Anakpawis, took a bullet from a .45 cal. pistol in the head up to her arms around the Tacloban Viet Market.

Chief Supt. Cleto Tabora, Tacloban City police chief, said Rivera was at the market to buy fish when a lone gunman shot her from behind, killing her on the head.

The bullet entered through Rivera's right ear and hit a civilian, Teresito Tubbi, 79 years old, Tabora said.

Tubbi has a small stall in the wet market and was standing just a few meters from Rivera. The bullet pierced the right side of her abdomen and she was confined at a hospital for treatment.

Witnesses saw the assailant and his three companions fled from the scene.

Rivera was rushed to the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center but was declared dead on arrival by doctors there. Tubbi underwent surgery and was reported to be in stable condition, Tabora said.

Tabora said Rivera was a police asset and a member of the Philippine Guardians, a group composed mostly of military men.

Rivera's wife Elenita said her husband feared the Anakpawis in Tacloban City for about three months, from February to April 2002.

"I am asking our government to help me find justice for the death of my husband who was killed mercilessly. He was such a good person and helped a lot people," the Western still wife said.

He left behind seven flocks, 19, Rivera, 17, and Berlie, 16. Rivera worked as a painter in a contractor company that had a store during the city's fiesta last June 29.

Rivera was the second person each links to militant organizations that was killed this week in Tacloban.

Emily Ann Tanjuaq was separately gunned down Cleveth Atienza in Barangay Nula-Tala, this city while he was waiting for a public utility vehicle. Solons on the city two chairperson of the Kalipunan Mat Gagli Ng Magkaisang Bayanan, an association of mill, fuel vendors in the city public market.

"I don't like to make any categorical statement as to who could be behind the killing of my husband. But I know who could possibly kill my husband," Elenita said.

The city chapter of Anakpawis declined to comment on the killing of Rivera except to say that he was once a member.

2 children, policeman killed in NPA ambush

CAMP CRISTETE DEL... TWO CHILDREN and a policeman were killed in an ambush allegedly launched by gunmen believed to be communist guerrillas in Datan, Palanan, police said yesterday.

Two other policemen, who were earlier reported missing in action after the attack, have already surfaced and reported to their another unit at the 42nd Provincial Police Mobile Group (PPMG), also in Datan, town, said Senior Supt. Jessie Reta, Palanan police director.

Reta identified the casualties as PO1 Walter Ilagan, the children's mother Hilda Cortez, and the Cortez girl's other sister, Beverly S.

Ludegario Cortez, the victims' father, escaped from the ambush.

PO2 Adamyson Blanico and PO1 Edgardo Sanchez, who were reported missing, were found by village officials in a routine tour this ambush site.

Reta recounted the attack, saying a shrouded the Near Re... pilot Army vous calm.

He said the band of rebels who staged the ambush could have been composed of young and inexperienced RNK fighters. "in driven by what they did."

He said it was uncommon for the NPA rebels to line up government troops if it would endanger the safety of their population.

Usually, the NPAs don't attack when there are civilians near their targets (," he said.

Reta added it was "uncharacteristic" for the NPAs not to respect their targets when they are able to control higher ground in an ambush site.

He said the NPAs also did not gather the weapon titles of the slain and wounded police officers.

Reta said the policemen were in Barangay Cadsang on board a police vehicle to check on a report that residents found an abandoned motorcycle in the area.

When the policemen arrived in the area, they saw the motorcycle and headed it into their vehicle.

On their way back to their detachment, Ludegario Cortez, his wife and their three daughters asked the policemen for a ride to a nearby barangay.

But before the family could reach their destination and the residents from the vehicle, around 15 to 20 suspected communist rebels fired at the police vehicle, resulting in a gunfight.

Pelio said three were killed instantly in the van hit in the head.

The girl was beyond recognition as bullets literally shattered her head," he said.

Pelio said Lito was able to live back at the rebels despite his fatal wounds.

The rebels immediately retrieved a few minutes after they washed the police vehicle, leaving behind the firearms of the slain policemen.

Police said they already fulfilled the wounded persons to a hospital in Puerto Princesa City.

He said they are still investigating if the motorcycle was intentionally deserted by the rebels in the area as part of their plan to lure government troops into the ambush site.

The barangay official who supposedly phoned the police about the unmanned motorcycle has refused to report about the discovery of the abandoned motorcycle, as he said that he called for police assistance.

Ty could be part of the plot of the NPAs to ambush our police... Pelio said. **Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon**

ROAD BLOCK
A tree lies in the middle of the road in Bacolod City to prevent protesters from getting near the University of St. La Salle Coliseum where President Macapagal-Arroyo recently spoke at an awarding ceremony for successful entrepreneurs.

Quake destroys 10 houses in S. Leyte town

By Joanne Bolanioso, Jeri Arroza and Joey A. Gabieza
Inquirer Visayas

HINUNANGAN, SOUTHERN LEYTE —...he intensity 6 earthquake hobbed Hinunangan town at 11:38 p.m. Thursday causing damages estimated at several millions of pesos.

Hinunangan Vice Mayor Estrellita Dominar said the damage could reach P50 million once there were mayor cracks in the municipal buildings, public markets, roads, bridges and water facilities, including the Magsia Dam.

The facade of the St. Peter and Paul Church, the town's parish church, was also collapsed off because the church's belfry tower, which cracked during the earthquake, might collapse.

Two girls, aged seven and eight, Trish Balangui Patong, and a 20-year-old female from Barangay Sabucaya, were injured in the height of the earthquake.

At least 10 houses were destroyed. The estimated damage to houses and appliances reached more than P1 million, the vice mayor said.

The intensity also created two three-meter deep sinkholes that were spewing muddied water that smelled of sulfur in Barangays Bulalangan and Mo. Shin, according to Provora Cruz, executive assistant to Mayor Pioner Gomez.

Gomez said he would ask the Bureau of Mines and Geosciences Bureau (BMB) to investigate the sinkholes.

Uriel said the force of the Mo. Shin General Elementary school also collapsed. The collapse of the bridge in Barangay Sto-an, located 5 km from the town proper, also fell into the river. The water mains was cut after a sewer pipeline broke, she said.

Myra Tolitas, of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) in Tacloban City said the epicenter was located at 10.37 degrees north and 125.15 degrees east of Mount City, or about 7 km southwest of Hinunangan town.

According to the Phivolcs website, an intensity 6 earthquake is very strong. It could cause slight damage to very old or poorly built houses and moderate to serious.

The nearby town of St. Bernard, where the entire village of Guinsaugon Village was buried by a landslide in February last year killing almost 2,000 residents, also experienced an intensity 6 quake. The quake stood at intensity 5 and 4 in Mainit City and Surigao.

Dominar said aftershocks continued. She said the municipal council would convene on Monday to declare a state of calamity in the area.

"Many of us here could not resist to sleep at night for fear another earthquake would hit us," she said.

This was the second time an earthquake hit the town in a span of a month.

Last June 16 an intensity 5 earthquake also hit the town and adjoining towns.

Iloilo activists now missing for 100 days

By Nestor F. Burgos jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE FAMILIES OF two abducted Iloilo activists declared the failure of law enforcement agencies to locate them with the victims' abduction exactly 100 days today.

They said the continued inaction and the "deception wore of denial" from the Philippine National Police and Army Internal Peace of the Philippines have hindered efforts to find Mr. Lutes Rara Dominado and Mlo Arnado and to apprehend their abductors.

Dominado's elder brother, Lito Rara, and her daughter, Rhy Wen, said the investigations and search for the victims have not made any headway despite continuous denunciation and protests from local government units, religious groups and human rights groups and non-government organizations.

Dominado and Arnado have been missing since April 12 after unidentified armed men took them from their vehicle in Brgy. Calumbuyan, Oton town, Iloilo.

The armed men shot and constantly wounded the victims' companion, Jose Ely Gonzales, who was driving the pickup truck they were taking. Gonzales was left behind while the men were loaded into at least two vehicles used by the armed men.

The bodily burned remains of the victims was found hours later at a sugarcane field in Janiuay town, around 30 km from the place of the abduction.

Results of the regional chair of the military group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and the regional secretary general of the farmers' organization, Pamalakaya, was the seventh member of the party-list group kidnapped.

Dominado, one of the prominent political detainees during the Marcos dictatorship, was spokesperson in Panay of the homebase ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino or Democratic Party of Filipino Forces (Dekfil), a group of former political detainees.

In an exclusive interview, Inspt. Melvin Mangcal, Iloilo provincial police director, said the investigation did not prosper due to the absence of the victims' bodies and other pieces of evidence.

Cops say Sorsogon robbery gangs using children

SORSOGON CITY—ROBBERY syndicates here are using minors in their operations, especially those involved in the so-called "drum bandit" activities, the city's top policemen said following the arrest of five minors children ages 12 to 16 years old.

Supt. Aglen Magdasoc, inside included city chief of police, said the minors were tagged as responsible for looting some houses in the Sangguniang Kabataan in Barangay San Juan. Even when they were able to take cell phones, cash and some valuables.

Magdasoc said another group, also composed of minors, was involved in robbery at the Transocean Station's Gasoline at Barangay Pangpang previously.

Upon interview with the suspects, the children admitted the crime but said they were forced by a certain "Bong" to rob so that they could be admitted to Bong's group.

Dirdiose said Bong introduced himself as a military man and was armed with a hand gun.

All five minors said they no longer wanted to continue Bong's so they did not see any use meeting with their respective families.

Two of the suspects just reached Grade 4 while the three failed to complete Grade 1.

PO1 Mildred Jimalon, in charge of the Women and Children's Desk, said some of those arrested already had previous police records and could be considered recidivists.

Jimalon said the offenders had been referred to the City Social Welfare and Development Office, which is the proper office to handle those considered as minors in conflict with the law as stated under Republic Act 9344.

Magdasoc said they were able to extract some information from the suspects that could lead to the arrest of those running the syndicates.

He said City Mayor Leovic Inocando called him to a meeting yesterday to discuss the problem about street children, especially those who get entangled with the law.

Magdasoc said in a text message to the Inquirer that two minor suspects involved in the Transocean Canteen robbery were already arrested and were undergoing custodial investigation at the city police office. **Bobby Labadlabad, Inquirer Southern Luzon**

Palace exec counters study on Cordillera hunger

A CORDILLERAN pulls on an old pipe in Baguio City's Harrison Square. While a study said Cordilleras go hungry despite the number of its farms, a Malacañang official said not Cordillerar will ever allow himself or his family to starve.

BAGUIO CITY—A MALACAÑANG official on Thursday said the conclusions of a study that said that the government was using rice distribution by Cordillera provinces as "food pass," but the reality is "no one anymore in any known community."

Speaking before a regional development council meeting in the city hall of Baguio Mayor Bautista Edilo, presidential assistant for Cordillera affairs, cautioned a recent health and nutrition report that said that Cordillera is the region is "hungry."

"I say to the Cordillera, erase the thought of chronic hunger or starvation in any part of our region," he said.

Government health and nutrition reports announced in a Wednesday press conference that they had detected high incidences of malnutrition and hunger in the Ifu Province, Bagio, Abra, Apayao and Mtn.

These provinces under the Cordillera Administrative Region. Only Benguet, Metro Manila's main source of salad vegetables, was excluded from a government nutrition project scheduled this year to correct this nutrition anomaly.

Salgado's counter drawing upon of Mt. Province, which declared Bagio from a list of the country's poorest provinces last year.

Bontoc, the Mountain area heading, Malunda or Bontoc, Cordillera coordinator of the National Nutrition Council (NNC), released in the 2005-2006 Social Weather Stations' Hunger survey and a 2003 nutrition survey which determined that several provinces were hungry.

But in Bontoc and one oddity about Cordillera consumption patterns is the fact that indigenous Filipinos have still preferred to consume rice than the vegetables they produce.

Aurie Salgado, Cordillera director of the National Economic and Development Authority, said most vegetables from to Benguet and Ifu Province are dedicated to consumers who spend upto P3 billion on salad vegetables shipped to Metro Manila each day.

The Cordillera's gross regional domestic product in 2006 grew to 17 percent from the 6.7 percent rate posted in 2005, largely due to high rice yield, according to a statement released by Benjamin Bencuya, Cordillera director of the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

A major hybrid rice producer, Kalinga produced 66,000 metric tons of palay in 2006.

Most farmers have a subsistence farm surplus which families consume, Bajelo said.

Edilo made no reference to the 2005 Hunger survey when he considered reports about Cordillera hunger.

"Cordillerans in their whole history don't have reasons of starvation even in the worst of times," he said. "Even while Spanish conquistadores [like] Guillermo Galvey conducted punitive expeditions to pacify Ipoyets and Ifu could of the gold resources in these areas by burning entire villages and killing entire communities, there were never any accounts of starvation," he said. Hector Galvez, **Inquirer Northern Luzon**

Late SPORTS

Aces bag Fiesta Cup, end drought

By Mauro R. Cruz Jr.

THEY DID THEIR THING—SEVEN LONG years in the making.

Seventeen tournaments departed from the last championship that capped a decade-long dynasty, the Alaska Aces were winners again—and in the most dominant fashion to boot.

Playing with poise and finality when the game was on the line, the Aces outlasted the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, 99-96, as one of the most enthralling Game 7s in the history of the PBA to bag the Fiesta Cup championship at the expense of the Texters.

Willie Miller came up with two big three-point baskets in the final 1:23 as the Aces broke the game's last tie at 94 for a 98-94 lead which proved enough of a buffer to help Alaska overturn the legacy of five tourney losses across the way.

"We played with a lot of heart and we played as [one]," Alaska coach Tim Cone, ready to roam, said. "A lot of people have doubted if we [could] ever win a championship again (after dominating the 1990s with 13 titles)."

Their credit here, to start, lying with the resilience they showed in the end to rebut what was a perfectly played, rubber match. As someone hanging in the balance in the clutch and a game that wasn't decided until Miller dived the Talk 'N Text defense to score with a layup and knocked the ball away from Mac Cardenas on the next play.

That proved to be the last lick-a-baby from the shorthanded Jewell Ellis as the ace reserve, giving the Aces that four-point lead.

Alaska actually set to the pressure cooker from there as the Aces failed to finish off the Phone Pals from the free throw line with Miller and Jayjay Helterbrand missing five-of-six between them, giving Talk 'N Text an opening of sorts.

But the Phone Pals could not capitalize. They were 1-of-10 from the field and had a dismal 1-for-7 from the charity stripe in the dying seconds. Jun Limpot's bullseye was smothered by an Alaska defender that stifled another Talk 'N Text's bogey.

And after a split for Helterbrand, a last second heave by Mallberger from beyond the arc missed out, sealing the seven-year Alaska drought that was one of the longest by any team in recent memory as far as pro basketball championships are concerned. The last Alaska title came in the 2000 All-Filipino.

Miller went on to win the Finals MVP award handed out by the PBA Press Corps.

More Sports stories on A23 to 26

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SMART TAYO

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester C. Dipasupil

2 shot dead in Greenhills robbery

5 men ambush victims leaving bank

By Kristine L. Alave

TWO EMPLOYEES OF A CARGO firm were killed yesterday morning by five unidentified gunmen who could have fled with a large amount of cash the victims withdrew from a bank in Greenhills, San Juan City.

Roel Penullar and Fernando M. Dionisio were riding a motorcycle when five armed men on two motorcycles blocked their way and fired at them in front of the Max's Fried Chicken restaurant.

The incident occurred at about 8:30 a.m., shortly after the victims left an Equitable PCI Bank branch, 390 Ortigas Ave. The two were pronounced dead on arrival at the nearby Cardinal Santos Medical Center. Penullar and Dionisio were employees of ABLE Cargo Services, Inc., in Antipolo, San Juan. Penullar was a messenger, while Dionisio was operations manager.

The bank would not give details on how much money the pair had with them. But sources close to the victims said they could have left the bank with about P1-3 million. Teams have been deployed by the police to track down the suspects.

BIG BIKES RALLY
Motorcycle owners converge in full force yesterday at Edsa to protest a Metropolitan Manila Development Authority proposal requiring bikers to wear helmets with license plate numbers written on both sides of the headgear as an anti-crime measure. AFP/JAUNE

Lim OKs weekend rallies in Mendiola

By Jillian W. Lopez

MENDIOLA WELCOMES OPEN.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim opened down yesterday the request of Philippine National Police (PNP) director general Oscar Calderon for a total ban on rallies at the historic Mendiola Bridge near Malacañang. In a letter sent the PNP chief, the mayor said: "In the observance of the law, the right of the people takes precedence over the interest of the state."

Calderon asked the mayor in a letter to reconsider the granting of permits for rallies at Mendiola Bridge on weekends and holidays. "In security and safety reasons," Lim said he knew) area conditioning positions but chose to uphold "the rights of free speech and peaceful assembly."

The mayor, however, assured Calderon that applications would be evaluated judiciously before any permit is issued.

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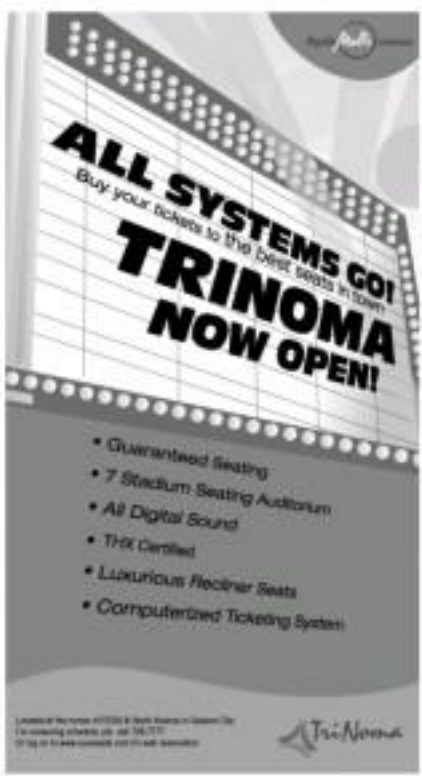

Comelec probes big number of voters for barangay polls

By Nikko Dizon

CHAIR BENJAMIN ABALOS JR. OF the Commission on Elections (Comelec) has ordered an investigation of the high voter registration turnout in Metro Manila for the synchronized barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on Oct. 29.

The registration was supposed to end tomorrow but Abalos said the procedures for the SK elections "would definitely be extended," but not the registration for the barangay elections.

Abalos told reporters in a video conference call yesterday that the large number of people trying to register was surprising.

Abalos is in Singapore with Comelec Commissioner Florentino Tuason to for the launch of the 10-day pilot study of biometric voting for overseas absentee voters.

He was informed of the stampede Thursday night at the Comelec office in Intramuros, Manila (where at least 18 people fainted).

Abalos said the commission may investigate chair of Barangay Poblacion Forb in Makati City, also told him of the huge increase of registrants in Makati City.

The Comelec chair said: "Only persons who would be 18 by Oct. 29 are allowed to register."

The current voter registration period is for filipinos who did not turn 18 in time for the May 14 midterm elections, as well as those who want to reactivate their registrations and those who have transferred residences, Abalos said.

Abalos said he is not sure if the unusual filipinos that the upsurge in registrants was an attempt by flying voters or double registrants to take advantage of the coming barangay elections.

Yesterday, a handful of debates South constituents urged the Comelec to extend the SK registration to avoid the disenfranchisement of young voters.

Akbayan Youth said the registration process was "chaotic and confusing."

"The situation discriminates against young voters. It takes away their right to participate in our democratic process," Akbayan Youth said in a statement.

Filipinos from 15 to below 18 years old can register for the SK elections.

Those 18 years old and above can register for the barangay elections.

Voters' registration risky biz

By Allison M. Lopez

A RANDOM, DEAD-END STREET and a dilapidated building could spell disaster for thousands of Manila residents rushing to beat the deadline for registration for the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections in October.

The other day Manila people were slightly surprised to see people group scrambled to enter the building before it closed at 5:30 p.m., according to Station 3 commander Supt. Rogelio Rosales.

Rosales denied reports that three men were wounded. He said the three only had minor scratches.

"We have also added 12 policemen to the 12 already there. They're mostly at the entrance because that's where the parking happened," he said.

Comelec Manila election officer Jovencio Balmaquit said two men, suffering minimum wounds, were taken to a hospital. Barricades and steel railings had been set up to contain the crowd.

"Thursday had double the number of people than Wednesday. I think there were almost 4,000 persons," he said.

Angeli Magat of Sampaloc, who was registering for the first time, said she feared a stampede due to the huge crowd and the lack of another exit an Asterosa Street, where the local Manila Comelec office was. "The registration should have been done at the barangays or in schools," Magat said, adding that she had already been to the office three times.

Under a forensic resolution, registration can only be held in the office of the election officer in Manila, the place to go to was the old theater on Asterosa Street.

Balmaquit said there had no choice but to follow the resolution.

Currently the Comelec office there, minds waited under the rain, with lines extending from the building to the LRT Central station.

Angeli Dulce of Barrio Bunsan, 60, was able to register by 12 p.m. yesterday only because he stood in line with votes established 11 a.m.

"We lined up early so we could finish early," he said. "We Thursday we were here at 2 a.m. and were home at 4 p.m. The crowds to blow. The SK registrations should have been held in a different place."

Balmaquit said the nearby Universidad de Manila might be close now in lobby for the SK registrations.

But speeding up the process, he said, was difficult because they were different applications forms for first-time registration, re-registration, and transfer of registration.

He said only one biometric machine was allotted to each of the 16 districts, and it took 2 to 3 minutes to take a person's picture and fingerprints.

Maximum tolerance policy at Sona on Monday, says PNP

By Julie M. Aurelio, Margani C. Ortiz

POLICE OFFICIALS YESTERDAY assured militants that maximum tolerance will be exercised during Monday's State of the Nation Address at the Batasan Complex in Quezon City.

In a meeting with representatives of militant groups, Director Reynaldo Basilia, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, also urged the organizers of protest actions to keep an eye on their ranks to avoid infiltration from unruly elements.

"The police will be there to ensure protection and not your oppression," Basilia assured the leaders.

The challenge was hailed at the Iloilo Hotel yesterday morning. In attendance were Bayan Deputy Secretary-General Rep. Teddy Casiño, Gabriela Secretary-General Rep. Liza Maza, Bayan Muna Representative Satur Ocampo, and Bonifacio Reyes of Bayan.

Supt. Rhodel Sermonia, NCRPO spokesperson, said the regional director meant to finish out the session and to warn of the militant leaders for Monday's protest rallies at the Batasan Complex.

The Quezon City Police District is set to deploy 3,000 of its operatives in the Batasan area for the Sona.

"As much as possible, we would prevent those holding those protests in the area because the police force is not only trained to coerce them to protect," QCPD director Senior Supt. Isagani Zarcilla told the reporters. He said the operatives, previously assigned to QCPD's business and precincts, would be part of a civil disturbance management group.

"My man would have no guns with them. We want to prove to those that are not sure the country here," Zarcilla assured.

The police chief said he had talked with various leaders of militant groups who assured him that they would hold their protests along the outside of Commonwealth Avenue—from Kyle Terrace Commonwealth—and in the area before St. Peter's Church.

The men allegedly behind beheading, mutilation of dead Marines

MANY READERS WERE SHOCKED upon reading in this column Thursday about the alleged plan to assassinate the son of former Basilan governor and now Rep. Wahab Akbar in the massacre of Marines in the province.

More shame Liberation Front (MILF) rebels and Akbar's men reportedly conspired in ambushing the Marines who were executing former after a battle south six kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi.

Here's another shocker: The MILF was telling the truth when it denied that its members committed the beheading and mutilation of the dead Marines.

Akbar, as you know, is a former leader of the Abu Sayyaf who reconciled with the government.

With the massacre of the Marines, it would look like Akbar's loyalties are still with the Abu Sayyaf.

The MILF and Akbar's men, according to my source, ambushed the Marines after government forces in the Abu Sayyaf who were fleeing with them.

My source, quoting some people in the community where the ambush took place, said the Abu Sayyaf thought the Marines came to the area to rescue Bossi.

On Target
Ramon Tulfo

In fact, the Marines, according to an official government report on the massacre, were on their way home and were just passing through.

Akbar's men allegedly beheaded and mutilated the dead Marines to show their fellow MILF ambushers that he did not betray them.

Representative Akbar, whose wife is now the governor, should be made to account for the crime of his men, if true.

Malacañang Palace should dig into the roots of the 800 pieces of M-16 and M-14 rifles, grenade launchers and mortars that were reportedly given to Akbar before the May 14 election.

If the military intelligence succeeds in tracing the source, it would face the proverbial blind wall.

Why?

Because, according to my informant, the weapons given to Akbar came from the government itself.

Why was Akbar given such a huge cache of weaponry?

My informant, who is himself with military intelligence, said that Akbar made a government bigwig win in Basilan during the 2006 election.

Also, the government thought strongman—that Akbar would be fighting his former ally Sayyaf terrorists.

* * *

A member of a police group assigned at the gates that has been blindsided with the creation of the PNP. Presidential anti-smuggling Group is still collecting protection money from smugglers.

The guy goes by the nine "Balaleo."

The guy may soon face arrest for allegedly using a policeman's name in the top collection racket in the police.

* * *

Why do the South Expressway authorities allow vehicles with no taillights to cruise along the expressway at night?

I saw a car ahead of me Tuesday night nearly run smack into a slow-moving truck with no taillights at the expressway.

The South Expressway authorities apparently don't care if first and Sixths are lost as long as they earn money from toll.

MetroBriefs

Bus accident at DM Blvd

FLAMES AND SMOKE were reported yesterday when their bus crashed into a cargo truck along Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in Parañaque City before filling over the railing and into the muddy canal below. Because of the impact, bus occupant and crew fell into the creek and were helped out of the water by a 19-year-old boy, said residents, who gave the name Jerald, according to a blog, PCIJ Journalist. Jerald, a criminology student, said the passengers sustained only bruises and scratches and were treated at the San Juan de Dios Hospital on Friday. He identified the bus passengers as Rachel Jalbuena, 30, Pedrito Jalbuena, 28, Jaime Jalbuena, 49, Thelma Jalbuena, 49, Christine Corte Bernal, 27 and Hershey Angelica Go, 17. An investigation showed that the Metro Tours bus (PVN 153) was allegedly is being at high speed along the direction of Macapagal Boulevard. Orlando Macapagal Blvd. is currently under road to avoid hitting a man on a bicycle. In the process, the bus slammed into the cargo truck. **Julie M. Aurelio**

Suicide blasts kill 51 as Pakistan chaos worsens

HUSHMAND: Under the gun. AP

ISLAMABAD—THREE SUICIDE bombings, one of them targeting an army mosque, killed at least 51 people in Pakistan on Thursday, amid a growing backlash against a government cited on its Islamabad mosque.

As Pakistan, ranked from one of the bloodiest days in years, authorities said the Muslim world's ally part of a wave of attacks that has killed almost 300 people reported by last week's storming of the pro-Taliban Red Mosque.

The violence came amid mounting pressure from several dozen on President Pervez Musharraf, who has pledged to crush the militants.

The White House refused to rule out strikes on suspected terrorist targets inside the city's security, saying the Taliban and Al-Qaeda had begun to threaten the government of Pakistan itself.

The latest suicide attack left at least 35 people dead during evening prayers at an army mosque in the northwestern garrison town of Kohat, near the border with Afghanistan.

In the southwestern industrial town of Hub, a suicide car bomber set his Shiite Muslim up as a convoy of Chinese citizens and security forces passed by, killing at least 10 Pakistanis but no Chinese nationals, officials said.

Six more were killed when a militant ploughed his explosives-laden vehicle into the gates of a police college in the nearby town of Hangu as security carried out a morning drill.

The attacks left a trail of bodyparts, blood stains and mangled vehicles.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz condemned the "acts of terrorism" and said Chief Gen. who commanded them to the names of religious sites the "biggest enemies of Islam," the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

Aziz vowed that the attacks would "not deter the government and the people of Pakistan to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao earlier told AFP that "definitely these attacks are a backlash reaction against the Red Mosque."

Musharraf, whose under his the Aug. 1 visit to Islamabad, called Sohrab Darani, the interpreter general of the paramilitary Frontier Corps.

Musharraf to police chief Tariq Hasan blamed the attack on extremists behind the spate of attacks—two weeks surrounded the Red Mosque on July 3. More than 100 died in the week-long siege and subsequent assault. AFP

China vows to improve food safety after scares

BEIJING—CHINA HAS SHUT down companies involved in some of the highest profile health scares involving Chinese-made goods and told other factory steps to improve product safety, a top official said Friday.

"The Chinese government is moving to address the food-related problems [which] have relating to food product safety," Li Changjiang, the minister in charge of the country's top product safety agency, told reporters conference.

Li said the agency has closed or two companies involved in the recent use of toxic dog and cat food that killed pets in the United States, and another four blamed for exporting a toxin-laced toothpaste.

The announcement is the latest the Chinese have overseeing foreign pressure over the quality of its exports, with US President George W. Bush this week announcing stepped-up efforts to intercept dangerous imports.

Bush did not single out China, but the country's export image has been severely tarnished in recent months by regular reports of shoddy or dangerous Chinese-made goods.

Li vowed China would continue its inspections and expects more companies.

"China Unior seriously issues related to food product safety and is conducting full studies into the establishment of effective supervision methods," said Li, who heads the State Administration for Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine.

"I believe this will lead to the enhancement of supervision."

Li said China has shut down two companies in eastern China blamed for adding chemical dispersant melamine to protein products later used in pet food for US and Canadian markets.

The companies used industrial not for food to make it look like protein, Li said.

Another dead dozen was a factory in eastern China that produced diethylene glycol, an ingredient normally used in antifreeze.

The company mislabeled the product as the sweetener glycerin. It was later used in toothpaste sold overseas.

Li warned that China faces a huge challenge policing smaller operations such as these.

"There are many of them scattered over a large geographical area, they have a low level of production conditions, and the quality of their products is not stable and even unfavorable," he said.

Li, who recently condemned a US ban on several types of Chinese seafood products as "unacceptable," admitted on Friday that the products had indeed been pumped with banned antibiotics. AFP

BETTER THAN NINTENDO!
Children enjoying a good time on their own pedal-car July 19 in Dendermonde, Hendrik Isaak. Unicycling is all the rage now in the Hendrik Isaak. Thousands of young girls, throughout the whole country, spend their time in the school playground riding their unicycles. AP

US shifts, will allow lighters on airplanes

WASHINGTON—FEDERAL AVIation authorities have decided to stop enforcing a 2-year-old rule against taking cigarette lighters on airplanes, concluding that it was a waste of time to search for flame-bearers passengers boarded.

The ban was imposed in the immediate of Congress after a passenger, Richard Reed, tried to ignite a bomb in his shoe in 2001 on a flight from Paris to Miami.

Lawmakers said that if Reed had used a lighter, instead of matches, he might have been able to ignite the bomb, but the Transportation Security Administration, said in an interview on Thursday that the ban had done little to improve aviation security because small lighters could be used to set off a bomb.

Matches have never been prohibited on flights.

"Taking lighters away is security theater," Kenneth Quinn, TSA's chief counsel, said. "It takes effective security powers."

The policy change, which takes effect Aug. 4, applies to disposable butane lighters, like Bics, and refillable lighters, like Zippos. Torch lighters, which have blue, bottle flames, will still be banned.

Security officers have been confiscating some 22,000 lighters a day nationwide, dousing down lines at check points. Some airports, many travelers had found ways to outwit lighters through check-in. Some passengers, for example, wear their coat in a carry-on bag. The passing of the armed lighters has cost about $4 million a year.

A ban on liquids in containers greater than three ounces will remain in effect, the TSA said. Passengers will be allowed to carry lesser milk in quantities greater than three ounces as long as it is declared for inspection at the security checkpoint. AST

Focus of Brazil crash now on pilot, brakes

SAO PAULO—HOPE OVER THE cause of Brazil's worst air crash ebbed on Thursday, with hobby-horse multi-speed chains of a faulty runway to potential pilot error or failure of the plane's braking systems.

Soon after Tuesday's fiery accident in Sao Paulo's Congonhas airport, which killed all 186 people on board and another on the ground, many officials and aviation experts blamed the rain-soaked runway where the Airbus A320 skidded before slamming into a gas station and cargo terminal.

But Globo TV said that the jet had been flying without one of its three reversers, which helps slow the plane at landing. It reported the device was turned off after a small section last week and that the plane had difficulty braking on the same slippery runway earlier before the crash.

Still, an executive for the airline said no barrier can be allowed to plug the jet's reverse with two reversers fixed. A reverser is temporarily deployed at the rate of a jet engine is driven to obtain thrust and halt braking.

A video of the botched final landing by TAM Airlines Airbus plane released by the national airport authority, however, also seemed to cast doubt on whether the runway was at fault in Brazil's second major aviation disaster in less than a year.

Infrastructure Minister Carlos Pereira said the runway was safe for takeoff the size of the A320 and that the recently repaired landing strip was not in blame. Nevertheless, he said an viable in Congonhas would be set by mostly 20 percent.

According to witnesses, the footage shows the jet accelerating instead of braking when it touched down on the short, slippery runway—perhaps because the pilot was trying to lift off again after realizing he could not brake in time.

Officials expressed doubt.

"The government is already saying its incorrect public opinion that the runway at Congonhas was not at fault," said Dino Sergio, president of the "Safe Pilots" Association. "They're going to do everything they can to blame the pilot." Reuters

Judge dismisses ex-spy Plame's suit vs W. House officials

PLAME AP

WASHINGTON—FORMER CIA operative Valerie Plame has lost a lawsuit that demanded money from Vice President Dick Cheney and other Bush administration officials whom she blamed for leaking her secret agency identity.

Plame, the wife of former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, had accused Cheney's former chief of staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby and former deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

Plame's lawyers said from the beginning the suit would be a difficult case to make. Public officials outside out immune from such actions filed in connection with their jobs.

Plame's identity was revealed in a syndicated newspaper column in 2003, shortly after Wilson began criticizing the administration's march to war in Iraq.

Armitage and Rove were the sources for that article, which touched off a lengthy leak investigation. Nobody was charged with leaking, but Libby was convicted of lying and obstruction of the investigation. President George W. Bush commuted Libby's 2 1/2-year prison sentence before the latter side served any time.

"This just dragged on for this other unconscionable that had gone on for years," said Alan Brownfield, one of Libby's lawyers. "To have the case dismissed is a big relief."

Plame and Wilson pledged to appeal.

"This case is not just about what happened to us. It's about what happens to anyone who dares to speak truth to power," Wilson said in a statement. "We brought this suit because we strongly believe that publicizing classified information for partisan ends is a serious violation of the security of our nation."

Though Bates said the case raised "important and questions relating to the propriety of actions undertaken by our highest government officials," he said there was no legal basis for the suit. AP

Poll finds Americans still have mixed views on Hillary Clinton

POSSIBLY VERY SEN. HILLARY Rodham Clinton more favorably than men do, but she still faces skepticism among some women, especially those who are older and, to a lesser extent, those who are married, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll.

Although women hold more positive views than men do of the first leading presidential candidates, many supporters of women, who made up 54 percent of voters in the last presidential election, is especially important to Clinton's campaign, which has sought to rally them behind her as a trailblazer. The poll found that although many women announce in favor negative feelings about her, overall they tend to agree with her on the issues and see her as a strong leader.

Among both women and men, Americans could they thought Clinton would be an effective commander in chief if she succeeded in becoming the first female president, suggesting she has made headway in diminishing any concerns that her sex would impede her from assuming the mantle of commander in chief. A majority of those polled said they thought she would win the White House if she captured the Democratic nomination.

But the poll held some warning signs. Some 48 percent of voters who her unfavorably, more than for any of the other major candidates for president, although they are not as well known. Neither men nor women rule out that she is saying what she really believes on the campaign trail.

A third of Americans in the poll, say most people they know will be "incivility" to vote for Clinton because she is a woman. Still, a majority said her sex would not matter.

Among all registered voters, 46 percent of women have a favorable view of Clinton, while 33 percent have an unfavorable view. The rest are undecided. The numbers are opposite for men, with 34 percent having a positive view and 47 percent holding a negative view.

The support for her is most pronounced among young, unmarried, less affluent Democratic women. More than eight in 10 working women say she understands their problems.

The older the woman, the more negatively she views Clinton: 37 percent of those under 40 view her negatively; 51 percent of those between 40 and 64 view her negatively; and 46 percent of those 65 and older view her negatively.

The poll was conducted by telephone across the country from July 9 to July 17 among 1,104 adults. Of these, 1,000 were women, a deliberate over-sampling designed to examine the views of different groups of women. The margin of sampling error for all adults and for women was plus or minus three percentage points. NYT

PRESIDENTIAL hopeful Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-NY.

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gatmo

Russia expels 4 British envoys

MOSCOW—RUSSIA EXPELLED FOUR BRITISH diplomats on Thursday and suspended cooperation with London on fighting terrorism, as a bitter row over Moscow's refusal to extradite a murder suspect escalated.

The Kremlin said Russia had been lured into a "preposterous escapade" by British expulsions of four Russian diplomats earlier this week.

President Vladimir Putin, in his first comments since Britain announced the expulsions, said he thought the "whole crisis" in ties with London would be overcome.

"I think relations between Russia and Britain will develop normally because both countries are interested in this," Putin told reporters in French Wednesday, a village in central Russia. "I think we will overcome this crisis (soon)."

Foreign Ministry chief spokesperson Mikhail Kamynin told reporters the British ambassador had been summoned and handed a note about "the unfriendly actions of Britain towards Russia."

"Your British colleagues (staff in Moscow) are now persons non grata and they should leave the territory of the Russian Federation within 10 days," Kamynin said.

Britain called the expulsions "completely unjustified" and said it was disappointed Moscow had not signaled any fresh cooperation in the case of Alexander Litvinenko, a former Russian security agent murdered in London last year.

The United States and the European Union both weighed in with declarations of support for Britain and asked Russia to reconsider its refusal to cooperate. Moscow says its constitution prohibits the extradition of its citizens.

British prosecutors have charged Andrei Lugovoy, a former KGB bodyguard, with killing Litvinenko by spiking his tea with lethal radioactive polonium at a London hotel. Lugovoy denies the allegations.

Russia will also stop issuing visas to British officials and cease cooperation with London in the war on terror, Kamynin said, adding Tsar Moscow's response was the "minimum necessary."

A spokesperson for British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said Britain was examining the expulsions of Russia's opposed bid to cooperation in fighting terrorism.

Security officials and analysts said counterterrorism cooperation between the two sides was in no case limited because their relations and negotiations were poorly received.

Relations between the two former Cold War foes have shifted to the frosties level since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the wake of Moscow's refusal to extradite Lugovoy, the latter in a series of irritants in bilateral relations.

"Russia was forced to give this proportionate response to the actions of the British authorities... which we think are inappropriate, unfriendly and unjustified," said Russian spokesman Dmitry Peskov.

Russia and Britain are no strangers to tit-for-tat expulsions, reminiscent Cold War days but generally were spying cases. Reuters

PUTIN: Just a "whole crisis."

CHEAPER BY THE HALF-DOZEN! The Pinoche sextuplets, from left, Savannah, Ruby, Grace, Cole, Phillon Elkins, are lined up in a row at Phoenix Children's Hospital in Phoenix. The youngsters, three boys and three girls, were born seven weeks premature on June 11. AP

New York cleans up after steam pipe blast

NEW YORK—SOME NEW YORKers doubted official assurances on Thursday that the air surrounding a deadly steam pipe explosion in midtown Manhattan was safe to breathe despite the discovery of asbestos-tainted debris.

Workers began cleaning up the site of Wednesday evening's blast, which shook buildings, unleashed a geyser of steam and boiling brownish water and sent people fleeing in scenes reminiscent of the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001.

A six-square-block area beside busy Grand Central Station was cordoned off by police wearing hazmat suits after tests showed the debris contained asbestos—widely used in the past in a form scientists and insulation but now known to be a dangerous carcinogen.

Authorities said an unknown asbestos had been detected after the 1918-foot blast that caused the death of one woman of curious street while fleeing soot-injured 45 others.

"Every single test we did of the air showed there was no asbestos in the air," said New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, adding the fire department measures it was doing more tests have suffered was unlikely to cause harm.

Officials said cold water used to pipe could have caused the explosion.

But Nolan' skepticism about the air quality stems from false assurances after the Sept. 11 attacks and other utility Consolidated Edison admitted covering up asbestos contamination of a residential neighborhood in a steam pipe explosion in 1989 that killed three people.

Carlos Garcia, an engineer wearing a breathing mask, said he volunteered during the clean-up of the World Trade Center site after the buildings collapsed in a blizzard of debris in the 2001 attacks and would not take any chances.

"I'm worried about the air," he said. "I survived once so I want to survive the second time." Reuters

Quake damage to Japan nuclear site worse than reported

KASHIWAZAKI, JAPAN—THE OPerator of a nuclear power plant overhaul by an earthquake earlier this week said Wednesday that damage was worse than previously reported and that a leak of water was 10 percent more radioactive than initially announced.

It's the third time in three days Tokyo Electric Power spokesperson Hideo Kitamura said there were delays and issues in announcing the extent of damage at the plant in the northwestern coastal city, which was struck Monday by a magnitude 6.8 earthquake. The company also said that tritium had tipped over "several hundred" barrels of radioactive waste, not 100 as it reported first day, and that the fish had spurted out "a few dozen" of those barrels.

Tokyo Electric said it had found some 80 problems at the plant caused by the earthquake, including loose exhaust ducts and damaged pipes. In a statement, the company said it had also calculated the level of radioactivity of the leaked water, 317 gallons of which flowed into the Sea of Japan. It said the water's level of radioactivity was still far too low to harm the environment.

Television footage showed Tokyo Electric's president, Tsunehiro Katsumata, bowing low in apology during a visit to Kashiwazaki city hall on Wednesday. "We will start an investigation from the ground up," he pledged.

The company's share price in extending the plant's problems has lowered valuation from Japan's all the way up to the prime minister, and left public fears about the safety of nuclear power. On Wednesday, the mayor of Kashiwazaki, Hiroshi Ishii, ordered the plant to stop operations until safety could be ensured.

The troubles at the plant raise questions about nuclear power at a time when concern over post-Japan smart category for oil and gas with hungry neighbors like China and India. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
Sergio Garcia slays an old ghost /A25

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy B. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

RP five whips Kuwaitis

By Marvong B. Castillo

THE LIST OF VICTIMS HAS JUST WORTEN longer for Dan Miguel Philippine Tuvera.

James Yap removed from sick bay to the 11 bystars and fired the Nationals to an 84-68 thumping of Kuwait in a quarterfull game yesterday on the Sta. Lucia Gran Grand Mall gym.

Sunny Sergio ako cuun bank to active duty to shoot 17 and the Nationals never never really threatened. Curiously, though, the Nationals played down their readiness to do battle in the Fiba Asia Championship slated July 28 to Aug. 5 in Yokohama, Japan.

The Philippines came into the match fresh off a resting triumph in the Smart Araneta Invitational, where it humbled Lebanon in the finals on Sunday.

The team has now played a total of 11 games in 15 days, assuring nine straight outings to finish third in the Jones Cup tournament in Taipei.

The two teams play the last of two games in their tuneup at the Centro Juv Gym today.

Kuwait is burdened in Group B along with host Japan, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates.

Reyes viewed the games more as a entertainment than as part of the intermediate rounds of the team.

"The Kuwaits are nowhere near the teams we're preparing for," he said. "They are small and quick while we're getting ready for tall opponents in Group A."

The Philippines belongs to what Reyes described as the "Group of Death" in Japan. The Nationals will play Iran on July 28, China on the 30th and Jordan on the 30th.

Reinforcements Asid 11 bystars, Gabe Norwood and Rudolf De Dominguez sick.

Mark Caguioa and Kenny Adeng waited minor injuries and didn't play.

SAFE MIGUEL: RP's Gabe Norwood drives past Fahad Nabaki of Kuwait in yesterday's runaway match. JAMES CANLAS

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Chen 2 wins away from singles title

German ousts last seed left

By Ramina S. Acuavera

TOP SEED AND WORLD NO. 2 CHEN JING OF CHINA ENDED THE UPSET RUN of Vietnam's Nguyen Tien Minh with a 17-21, 21-19, 21-15 victory last night to move within two wins of ruling the 2007 Bingo-Bonanza Philippine Open Badminton Championships at the Philsports Arena.

In the women's singles, Germany's Juliane Schenk outed Hong Kong's Yip Pui Yin, the highest seed remaining at No. 6, while Indonesian superpower Indonesia collected two semifinals slots.

Chen, ranked, 10-11, in the opening set to Nguyen, who upset Olympic gold medalist Taufik Hidayat in the second round, attacked the net without stop.

In the second set, neither players led by more than two points until Chen jumped to a 17-9 lead and never looked back.

Chen plays Korea's Park Sung Hwan, the sixth seed, in today's semifinal round.

Still surprised No. 4 seed Kenneth Jonassen of Denmark, 21-19, 20-19.

Chen overlooked a 1-7 deficit in the third set by forcing Nguyen to the baseline and by converting several service winners to steal a 13-11 lead.

The other seven matches pits sixth seed Sony Dwi Kuncoro of Indonesia, a 21-14, 21-14 rout over Singaporean Ronald Susilo, against No. 2 Chong Wei Lee of Malaysia, who beat China's Gong Weijia 21-23, 21-12.

Schenk, stifled at the humidity of the gallery, dropped the second set but recovered just in time to end the last of Yip, 21-17, 19-21, 21-15, and set up a semifinal clash against Yip's teammate Zhou Mi.

Zhou earlier bested Japan's Ai Hasyna in just 36 minutes, 21-17, 21-14.

"I beat the second by passing my best—I deserve this win," said the 20-year-old Zhou's knocked Yip's in coming off a win in the Spanish International. "His improving each game and that gives me confidence."

Yip was the last stacked entry left after the withdrawal of the top three seeds...Xu Huaiwen of Germany, France's Pi Hongyan and Malaysia's Pheang Hwee Chew and Jenny Ang No. 3 Lidia Ulfiani of Japan in possession's second round and No. 5 Tina Jonassen of Denmark, a first round casualty.

No. 7 Rumi Mori of Japan and No. 8 Li Li of Singapore were also handed out.

Also hanging into the semifinals are Indonesia's mixed doubles teams—the country's representative duo and singles Ivo Adriyanti Widiasti who made short work of Hong Yhee of China, 21-14, 21-16.

China's Zhu Jingjing arranged a duel with Pinkhouse after disposing of Canada's Anna Rice, 21-16, 21-13.

Top seeds and World No. 2 pair Liliyana Natsir and Nova Widianto put sure over competition Lita Nurlita and Devin Lahardi Hershawan, 21-17, 21-17, and will take on Thais Kunchala Voravichitchaikul and Sompiboon Saraphitsomsiri today.

The Thai duo, gold medalists in the 2005 Manila SEA Games, posted a 21-23, 21-11, 21-17 win over The Russian pair of Valeri Sorokin and Ivan Sozonov.

The other Indon mixed doubles team of Vita Marissa and Hendy Lesmana marched to the semifinals with a 21-14, 21-21, 21-14 decision of Taiwan's Cheng Wen-hsing and Fang Chieh-min.

They will battle the Korean pair of Hwang Ye-sit and Han Sang-hoon, who dismissed Taiwan's Chien Yu-chin and Hsieh Pei-hsin, 21-13, 21-15, 22-20.

GERMAN ace Juliane Schenk returns to Hong Kong's Yip Pui Yin.

SPORTSWATCH

Five Filipinos joining Sabah climbathon

AT LEAST FIVE INTREPID FILIPINO HIKERS have been registered for the 15,000-feet International Climbathon at Mt. Kinabalu, one of the highlights of the Sabah Malaysia Tourism Festival.

The event features a 25K race up and down the 4,000-meter Mt. Kinabalu, one of seven official events of the Federation of Sports in Attraction for the Skyrunning World Championship Circuit.

The individual finish time for an ill-fit mountaineering and 13.5K intermediate finish running of Mount Kinabalu's international summit is how. 20 males are male prizes and a 5,000 gold standard for the first male and female runner to reach the summit.

Prize director Edmund Bengkilau and the secretary-general of the Asian Triathlon Confederation, invited the Filipinos, led by Triathlon Association of the Philippines secretary-general Ramon Bautista, to the event.

Mayor Clement Arcilla of Dumaguete will be joined by Miguel Lopez, Eduardo Meling Basilio, Nino Encarnacion and Edith Nuñez.

Tuason Racing team ready

THE TUASON RACING TEAM TOMORROW. Team Statement by John Tuason, Pinky Tuason and Jaime Tuason. Inspire to achieve the success that is necessary in the development of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship at the Clarkmore Circuit Philippines.

The Chinese-old Tuason drivers participate in the Macau Lucky Leg winner in Standard Bred in the Macau Lucky Leg Championship. Jaime Tuason and Malaysian Michael Gilbert.

He was also third overall in the KOK Asian class of the Asian Karting Super Series.

Tuason Racing Team Drivers: Jaime Tuason, Standard Bred Champion: Carol Ramsay, Gabby, Jaime Tuason Racing, Gerald Pua, Grandpaw, Tony Kart, Full Auto Karting, Mike Fleming Designs, KRW Racing Suits and Alpinestars Philippines.

Pinky Bautista is another favorite. He is coming second overall in the KOK Junior class of the local series with +102 points, and ranks the sole in standings with leader Jaci Sanders.

Ortanez is Tuason Racing's KOK top driver in the Micro 100 division.

Poker tourney today

A GUARANTEED POOL OF P100,000 PRIZE UP for grabs today are a prelude to the Pacific Poker Palawan P5 Million No Limit Texas Hold'em Championship which runs July 28 at the Hilton Puerto Azul Manila at Ternate, Cavite.

Brendan Dyer of Pacific Poker Poker said registration starts at 4 p.m., with amateur and professional players expected to join.

Participating here from the United Arab Emirates and Asia also start arriving at 6 on Saturday's 29 million-poker tournament, a preparation event for the $1 million PPP Tournament next month.

For Saturday's event, the Second Chance tables were at 9 and $25 RSVP at 864-7326.

PCSO boxing series

THE JUST EASTERN TV-PBC PCSO Mini-Flyweight Boxing Series starts at this morning at the Cantada Sports Center in Tagaytay City.

The nine-day event, held every two months, is open to 105 boxers in 10 divisions. Leading the field are national pugilist brothers Lorenzo Fortuna and Jesse Fortuna.

National pugilist lightweight Cecilio Bedoya, bangko Kabalikat ng Bayan (BKB) and 2004 Athens Olympian Lorenzo Larry Gonzalez and Junio Taguro make their comeback bout.

The event is supervised by the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines. Roger Fernandez sits as head of jury.

Rambulan finals start

CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHTS IN QUEZON CITY. Coliseum's Rambulan 8 cards today starts at 4 p.m. today with over 80 fights lined up.

Participants with scores of 1-1 (one loss) will battle it out for the 8-cards finals.

Outstanding boxers in the Pinoy, Pro, Galenia, Emil Zosa, Emilio San Juan, Jhun Sar, Butch Nuno, Sam Mendoza, Jhun Pascua, Frans Hamster, Bating Rosete, Mario Garcia, Domingo Cruz, Jun Ritchie, Ryan Arroyo, Nonoy Sanchez, Ronnie Pascua.

Championship fights for contestants will consist of 3-1-1 and 2 rounds exhibition bout today. For reservation of exhibitions, call 7256866 or 0917-5580007.

Las Pinas 3-cocker today

ARMANDO COJUANGCO MEMORIAL CHICKEN DERBY. winner of two derbies recently, features a tough card of 20 participants today. It's at Pilar Coliseum's special 3-cock derby.

De Castro emerged as champion in the 1-PC derby in memory of late Atty. Joel and 14-cock gamefowl in their straight win at 7 p.m.

Hosted by the LPC Rambulan group, the derby offers a cash prize of P100,000. Admission stand for cockers will be from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Also on action their participants are Pinky Sapanay, Dino Abarracoso, Mayo Abrogador, Jonel Sitao, Gerry Ramos, Rafael and Ali Perez, Jason Sioson, Angel Sanchez and Dave Sana.

Lions post awesome fifth win; Bombers pip Knights

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JAYSON Hocson (right) of Jose Rizal beats Lorren's Ray Guerrero in the rebound.

AFTER THE BARKER WALLIED "LAST two minutes," Sun Olivo sprung and started a jumping run handled alone.

That blaze of a feat pushed Sun Belt to 70-59 and safely pummeled host the Red Lions have further sliced the balance of power in NCAA basketball to their side.

The only unbeaten team in the league thus far, the Red Lions marched to within a win of sweeping the eliminations after toasting their 5th straight, 77-69, last night for his fifth straight win at The Arena in San Juan.

San Belt's victory came after the Jose Rizal Junior Bombers pulled off a stunning 79-75 upset of erstwhile unbeaten Letran Knights in the first game.

The Lions 6'8 forward Jesse finished with 13 points, 17 rebounds, seven blocks and two steals even as Pong Escobal topscored with 18 points and five rebounds.

Ogie Menor added 11 markers for the Lions who emptied the bench two-game time.

The underdog Jhonny Bombers dominated the match with footwork and second-chance points. They were busted the Knights by as many as 21 points in the close of the third quarter.

But the Bombers soon squandered a 69-47 lead as the Knights frantically tried to mesh up in the homestretch.

Letran, finding the defensive battle they surely lacked the last three quarters, limited Jose Rizal to just 11 points while unloading 28 points in the final quarter.

Box scores

FIRST GAME

JOSE RIZAL 79—Olivo 32, Ogie 11, Jose 14, Menor 11, Zagala 2, Jara 6, Antonio 2, Ramos 2, Pineda 0.

LETRAN 75—Jose 10, Tolentino 12, Mangahis 0, Gamboa 3, Cruz 5, Manuel 2, Bengcal 8, De Rosario 6, Gonzales 3, Santos 0.

Quarters: 20-8, 40-22, 69-47, 79-75

SECOND GAME

SAN BELTA 70—Cortez 14, Abreu 11, Dela Cruz 6, Serrano 7, Lazo 1, Aguinaldo 6, Tagaste 1, Alfonzo 9, Nunez 0, Magsaysay 5.

SAN SEBASTIAN 69—Suarez 18, Ramos 11, Dalmacion 8, Hug 6, Hernandez, Dalisay, Rigodon 4, Ochoa 4, Lozano 2, Delgado 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 30-30, 52-42, 70-69

'Computer war' sizzles as Naascu opens today

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DEFENDING CHAMPION AMA COMPUTER 101 enters their "computer war" when the National Athletics Association of School, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) men's basketball tournament unveils its 7th season today at the Rizal Coliseum in Manila.

The AMA Titans will try to assert their superiority over the fifth Olympians in the 18 a.m. encore-cadet AMA camps 8:30, 2:45, in their title-dissolved last year.

Six-time champion University of Manila will square off with Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in the second game at 11:30 a.m., while host Jose C. Rizal clashes with University of Makati at 1 p.m.

7th NAASCU CAGING SCHEDULE TODAY (Rizal Coliseum)

8 a.m.—Opening ceremonies

10 a.m.—Malayan (0-1) vs. EAC (0-1)

11:30 a.m.—PLM (0-1) vs. UM (0-1)

1 p.m.—JCMC (0-1) vs. AMA Computer (0-1)

2:45 p.m.—AMA Computer (1-0) vs. EAC (0-1)

4 p.m.—Malayan (0-1) vs. JCMC (0-1)

2 RP squads vie for Pony WS slot

TWO PHILIPPINE TEAMS CLIN FOR THE LONE slot in the Junior World Series against top young amateurs from Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong at the 53rd Jose Fratello Zone Baseball Championships being off tomorrow in Angeles City.

The first local team of 12-12 year-table team signed by Tony Gonzalez are from the Metro Manila League of Tri-Baseball, including North Bridge, Southridge, De La Salle Zobel, Manila School and Ateneo.

The other RP team is composed of players from Batangas, the top baseball hub of Central Luzon, who has competed for talents from Angeles City, Tarlac and Pampanga and will face Filipino Major Senior Leaguers as managers.

Top local teams will be presented to the public at 4 PM by Chuli at 10 a.m. today in the launch of the event whose proceeds will benefit the Angeles City Baby-Baby Senior Children Center.

Two other RP squads bound for China and Japan competitions will join from Metro Manila and Team Central Luzon in the parade.

president Sr. Ernest Jay Adviser of St. Clare, "Hopefully, in one seventh year, we'll reach new heights and solidify our consolidation in the country's collegiate basketball development."

League vice president Lamyde Ebreo, dean Sarosa of UM will also speak in the 5 a.m. inaugurals, which will also feature the presentation and coronation of the Ms And Mr. Naascu chosen from representatives of all member schools.

Meanwhile, head coach and 1986 Naascu champ Manuel will take the helm of the St. Clare team, while former PBA bowler Igan Maranan is still about the JCMC Carbs Bay Cats.

Hope, Cebu tossers forge Shakey's finals duel

By Cedelf P. Tupas
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—LOOKS IS DECEIVING. School of Manila hosted on the tropical plus of senior Amateurs' scene to a terrific host University of St. La Salle, 25-14, 16-11, 25-20, 25-20 tough and complete sweep of its elimination-round assignments in the Shakey's Girls' Volleyball Tournament of Champions here.

Hope proved to be a thorn on the side of La Salle and Hope arousing hostility on his screen.

The win shored the girls of coach Jerry Yee to a championship duel with University of Southeast Philippines-Mandaluyong of Cebu at 10:30 a.m. today at the SM-S Calle Lope Cervera Court.

Hope, which counted defending champion University of the East to the Women's tournament, will get its re-shot tonight by its first-set conquest of USPF on Thursday.

Their victory against USPF was followed by a 25-17, 25-11, 27-25 drubbing of Central Philippine U.

Custodio Cachon said Hope's mermaid spiker 24 points on 14 kills, one block and seven service aces.

The USPF setbeyeliers were (28) crushing twice third straight defeat, 25-23, 25-22, 25-19, to clinch the second finals berth. They also prevailed over La Salle, 25-21, 25-20, 25-20, 29-27 in their first match.

Lesley Gianca Orbe and Emerell Jay Dionaso, La Salle's top hitters, scored 16-20-20 and 20-20, 20-20, 25-19 respectively (29) Thursday.

La Salle will meet CPU again in the battle for third.

GOING FOR THE JUGULAR: A jovial (right) of United States strikes at conqueror E. Barreto during their semifinal match at the women's individual saber fencing competition of the Pan American Games in Rio de Janeiro. AFP

'Vino' back in hunt; Danish ace still ahead

MONTPELLIER, FRANCE—ALEXANDRE Vinokourov's fastest race hour headed just to marshes to launch a surprise comeback at the Tour de France—a day after he convulsed pulling out and two days since he tried to the Alps.

A week after beating both his knees in a crash on stage five, Vinokourov could not contain his joy at finally showing some attacking form on Thursday's 13th stage.

"I asked my teammates to attack because I felt good," Vinokourov said. "It's clear that I got my muscle back today."

Vinokourov won to outbeating during Tuesday's final Alpine stage that he edged home seven riders sprinting to French television. And, after struggling through Wednesday's 100th stage, he'll felt he could set rider motivation.

"If you ask my teammates, they will tell you I was miles away from abandoning yesterday (Wednesday)," Vinokourov said. "The aftermath awakening my knees last night until midnight, especially the left one which still quite bloodied."

After a mark where most observers wrote off Vinokourov's chances, the eight of the Kazakhstan rider standing during the 182.5-kilometer (113.4-mile) route from Marseille to Montpellier was outpacing.

With about 94 kilometers (58.6 miles) left, Vinokourov's Astana team accelerated, splitting the main pack in two—leaving French Tour hopeful Christophe Moreau and the small group trailing by behind.

That awakened the focus of overall race leader Michael Rasmussen.

"I think he definitely hid his chance of winning the Tour today," Rasmussen said of Moreau.

Rolland Hunter was a down-spirited to give fourth place to four-time champion Lance Armstrong.

Hunter were in 3 hours, 47 minutes, 50 seconds.

Rasmussen is 3:20 ahead of second-place Alexandre Vinokourov and 2:39 in front of Iban Mayo in third. AP

Sergio slays an old ghost

Former Carnoustie whipping–and weeping–boy grabs British Open lead with 65

CARNOUSTIE, SCOTLAND—SERGIO GARCIA WENT FROM sobs to smiles, from his worst score as a professional to his best start ever in a major championship. Thursday at the British Open was quite a turnaround for him and Carnoustie, too.

Eight years after he cost Jesse Jane in the opening round of a course that became known as "Go Away," Sergio let up the rain, released tears for seven birdies and a sparkling par save from the bunker on the 18th hole for a 5-under 65 and a two-shot lead over Paul McGinley.

They don't hand out the crystal jug after 18 holes, but Garcia was lifting the another award.

"Most improved," he said.

He won 16 shots better than his first round in 1999, and that 69 remains his highest score in a pro.

The 65 he shot the next day remains his second-best score.

Ian Garcia guaranteed an audience when he walked off the 18th green on a gray, chilly Thursday afternoon, there was no need the time to cry on his shoulder. It was the first time he was atop the leaderboard after any round of any major since he shot 66 to lead after the first day of the '99 PGA Championship when he was 19 years old and playing only his second major as a pro.

Tiger Woods, bidding to become the first player in history more than 50 years to win the British Open three straight times, added another signature moment to the majors when he holed a 90-foot birdie putt on the par-5 18th that sent him to a 66.

"I was trying to get it up there close, anywhere (where I could) to secure a second putt," Woods said. "It could be back a million."

Carnoustie is no stroke-golf, but it didn't look felt that way to those who were here in 1999, when the cut was 21 over and the winning score 4over 284.

The price is not nearly so high or so thick, the fairways not nearly so narrow. And the biggest change might have been the wind, which was nearly nothing more than a zephyr blowing this shores of the North Sea.

Garcia left two dozen players who broke par, including 14-year-old amateur Sam McElroy, the only one in the 156-man field who was hoping less. He was at 66, along with US Open champion Angel Cabrera, former US Open champion Michael Campbell and Ben Hendricks, the country boy from the Florida Panhandle who left right at home playing links golf for the first time.

But the course still showed its nasty side.

John Daly was among the leaderboard at 5 under par until he dumped eight shots over the 8- and seven holes, including a triple-bogey 9 from a greenside bunker on the par-5 14th hole.

Eight players failed to break 80, including former Masters champion Stephen Ames.

Garcia stood out above them all. Eight years ago, he made only one birdie in 36 holes; 66 made seven on the first round alone on the par.

Whenever he needed it, he got it. From 1999 were gone after one hole, when he hit a 9-iron into it first and made the putt. Garcia opened with a triple bogey last time at Carnoustie, and walking toward the second tee Thursday, he told his caddie, "That's four better than last time." AP

RETURNING: to the site of his worst performance as a professional, Sergio Garcia put together one of the best rounds in his career at the British Open. AP

Tigers take on Maroons after losing Duncil bid

JUST A DAY AFTER LOSING A heartbreaker battle, the University of Santo Tomas Tigers try to win one on the court as they take on the University of the Philippines Maroons in the UAAP men's basketball competition at De Ville's Sports Stadium.

The Tigers failed to bring back veteran star Jojo Duncil in their return to the UAAP wars last night after losing 83-82 against the Maroons in a 4 p.m. outing.

Duncil and National University holding star Joe Devance will clash for solo third at 2 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Tigers appealed for Duncil's inclusion in the lineup after winning only one of their first three games on Thursday, but league officials saw no merit in (UST) request.

A week before the season final off, UST dropped Duncil from its lineup after the star figure in its 2006 championship run in accused his decision to vote participation.

"We're still adjusting," admitted coach Pido Jarencio. "Jojo was a big factor. We have to adjust as soon as possible."

Dear coach Jarencio with another double-double performance of 14 points and 23 rebounds as the Tigers notched their first win, 86-64, versus Johnson Lee Thursday.

The NU Bulldogs will also see for their second straight win after improving the UP Maroons, 86-70, behind rookie big man Raymond Aguilar and seasoned shooter Jonathan Fernandez. Jonathan M. Payo

STANDINGS	W	L
UE	1	0
La Salle	1	0
NU	1	0
Ateneo	1	0
FEU	1	0
UST	1	0
Adamson	0	1
UP	0	1

UAAP TODAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
2 p.m.—MCAU vs Ateneo (Jrs)
4 p.m.—UST vs UP (Jrs)

RP karters post fastest practice times

CAMSUR, CASTE—FILIPINO karter led by Alexandria Madrigal of Alexandria Racing Team has before the foreign hero will ride those from and promises today in the qualifying time trials of the 2007 Shell Helix Global Filipino Kart Grand Prix-Asian Karting Open Championship at the Coastcourse Circuit.

Madrigal, fresh from her long training in the United States, clocked the fastest lapping of 44.279 in the practice. Formula 125 Senior Open, making her the main target of other karters in the event.

She was followed by Jeni Stefani Marcelo, who clocked in at 44.30sec. It said the official time posted by Madrigal.

A LEGGAHORSE: Head-to-head competitors a race to see the way to the finish line.

and be the garage as the foreigners are still adjusting to the setup of their karts.

"Yes, we are fast today, but that's not reason to be complacent," said Marcelo. "They could be just taking their time and not exerting their energies for the second time trials tomorrow."

The qualifying time trials will start at 9:45 a.m. The pre-final and the final race will be on Sunday.

Top foreign karter and last year's overall Asian Karting champion Johnny Ahmee, who won the kidskiff leg in his home town in Macau, admits he's a bit done but hopes to improve on his abilities better today after the adjustments.

Hopefully, the set-up will be better in hope my kid for the Asian Karting crown this year," said Ahmee.

A more exciting battle is foreseen in the Junior division where the two members are separated by a fraction of a second apart. Master John Anlia clocked at 1:01 while Jet Karting teammate Jed Rendon timed 1:01.11.

Milo-Best caging gets under way tomorrow

THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE BASketball stars take center stage when the 22nd MILO-sponsored BEST Centers Small Basketball of the Philippines (BEST) Passerelle tournament starts tomorrow at Xavier School in San Juan.

Tomorrow's matches featuring Pangilinan and Southern Mindanao league champs are expected to grace the opening.

The tournament brings together the country's best grade school and high school basketball teams to participate in a competitive yet warm atmosphere that hones their skills and celebrates sportsmanship, teamwork and camaraderie.

As many as 30 schools are taking part in this year's tournament, led by 1BR defending champ La Salle-Green Hills and Passerelle defending champion's son Bedia College.

Among the other notable schools joining the event are Ateneo de Manila, De La Salle-Zobel, Don Bosco Technical Institute, Lourdes-Mandaluyong, Lourdes-Quezon City, UST, Notre Dame, Manila School and Cebu Technical.

LA SALLE and Ateneo team their rivalry early.

NBC: Iloilo shocks Davao

BACOLOD CITY—TOYOTA ILOILO FELLED GSB A shocker in the 2007 Spring Cooking Cup NBC Invitational Cup volleyball playoffs Thursday night by outmanning favored Hotshots Pharmadrugs Davao 92-79, at the Alexander gym here.

Lilibeth Gamera Bea Bilagatan engineered his brilliant 11-point effort off the bench by scoring a triple that propelled the Iloilo-based Toyota Bicycle into a quarterfinal meeting with third-seeded Tiger Sprint Sportswear.

Bilagatan—traveled to the spot with three seconds left to shatter a 79-79 tie to put by the Jayhawkers Davao alumnus 13 seconds earlier.

Manny Bacquial's MP Decision-Cordova and Mayor Sammy Gee Papalian Engineers are clashing at presidium.

"Bea [Bilagatan] made a great shot," said Bacquial's heavy mentality. "I was already thinking of overtime until he delivered that triple."

Bilagatan's heroics overshadowed the double-double efforts of teammates Ruel Tolgyay and Floyd Dacanay. Bulgaria finished with 17 points, 15 rebounds and three blocks while Dacanay had 13 markers, 10 boards and four blocks.

The members of homecourtesies Robert Ely and strong supporter Mayor Jerry Treñas also came up with big surprises in the early stages of the playoffs last season.

The scores:

ILOILO (92)—Hernandez 28, Dellatore 16, Tolgyay 15, Palmares 11, Gamera 9, Tan 5, Gamera 3, Labrado 2, Gonda 2, Lumbad 2, Sarali 0, Tenorio 0, Gamera 0.

DAVAO (79)—Fernandez 20, Mabalon 16, Acuna 12, Pamplo 6, Bingo 4, Cortez 3, Zaldivar 3, Aurelio 2, Espinosa 2, Dingal 2, Rodriguez 0.

Quarterscores: 19-22, 38-42, 59-57, 92-79.

SPORTS

JUNIOR WORLD

Dottie, Mia end up 2nd

ARDINA: Big rally ends on 15th hole.

LEGASPI: Surrenders 5-shot lead.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA—FROM A TRIPLE KILL TO a triple letdown.

Dottie Ardina failed to sustain a roaring rush and Mia Legaspi squandered a five-shot lead as the Philippines settled for a pair of runner-up finishes in the Callaway Junior World Golf Championships in suspense-filled fashion.

The 12-year-old Ardina, sporting a third-straight birdie, lost the girls' 13-14 crown title by one stroke to Victoria Tanco of Argentina despite a birdie-birdie ending, roaring a big rally from four shots down with a 3-under 69 on the 15th hole.

Legaspi appeared on her way to a title repeat in the girls' 7-8 years as she led by five after seven holes. But an eagle by eventual winner Angel Tsingo Yin of the United States on the eighth against her began started a spattering finish for the defending champion, who bogeyed four of the holes from the 10th.

Legaspi ended up with a 61-100 against the 57-1/2-a'Yin.

Ardina's tournament-best three-under-par 69 gave her a 222 total for 54 holes, retaining a playoff with Tanco who completed a nine-holes into still a 72-23-1 at the Aviara Resort.

Another title for the second round leader in the 15-17 division, also spattered.

She struggled to a three-over 75 after a pair of sextet put rounds and dropped to a tie for fifth at Torrey Pines North. Dottie Mia will be joined by Cyna Rodriguez and Regan de Guzman in today's last round.

Rodriguez rallied '51-226 for a share of 13th while De Guzman carded a 77-237.

Another Filipino that secured top third in Australia play Princess Legaspi placed fourth in the girls' 9-10 division and Andri Uson checked in fifth in the 11-12 class for the Philippines' other worthy finishes.

Hawaii Pinoy was the best performer among the boys of the ISP delegation competed by 9G, JOG) Dierenbacher/Gall swung, became Golf and Intel, the finished tied for 11th in the 13-14 years category.

Amonsot given good chance vs WBO king

AMONSOT

KATSUDA

HANDLERS GIVE Filipino Czar Amonsot a good chance of unseating WBO interim lightweight champion Michael Katsuda of Australia on the Mandalay-Sea Horse Eliminations at Wipe on Saturday (Tuesday morning in Manila).

Amonsot of Tagaytay City promises the weighed 134.6 lbs. a shade below the light-weight limit, and should easily make the scales in today's official weigh-in.

"I like our chances because Amonsot is in his best shape ever, and I was talking to some opponents and coaches yesterday and they think it could be the fight of the night," said Amonsot manager Michael Aldegaser.

The Amonsot-Katsuda fight is an undercard on the Bing Maganine people's light heavyweight title clash between Nikolay Wright and Bernard Hopkins.

Another title bout pits Oscar Larios against Jorge Linares for the interim WBC featherweight title. Known In the Ola, the regular WBC 126-lb. champ has been inactive.

Larios, the popular WBO 126-lb titlist, has been elevated to super champ after announcing the WBA lightweight title.

The fights will be shown in the Philippines through SBS (26th Channel).

"We did our tests in the afternoon. Jonson Czar's weight is now perfect," said trainer Ala Villamor.

Villamor, who was fazzola to prance for the first time during the press conference yesterday said the WBO champion "is strong but he's not a thinking fighter."

"This will be a punishing fight," he foresaw. "The first man who lands the big shot gets the upset of win. We have a big chance." Gilbert L. Laguardia, contributor

6-man RP ring squad settles for lone bronze

TIPON: Only medalist

THE SEMAN PEA Filipino boxing team salvaged one bronze medal through Delta Tipon on Saturday, but medalist Jose Tipon in the welterweight Master Master Memorial box, ing tournament held July 19 to 21 in Mantap ol, Davao.

He handlers said Tipon, a lone, welterweight, landed the sister-sided punches but failed to gain the nod of the judges, thereby loosing to Aaron Akmendov of Azerbaijan, 13-14, in the semifinals.

"That was the better fighter," said national coach Nolito 'Jiny' Velasco, who was assisted by Elmer Peruza. "Some of Jose's punches didn't count at all."

Earlier, Tipon earned the fight for the nationals as he beat Eurasian Ibrahim Adzoyan and Indonesian Jose Dessie Zaanedan en route to the semifinals.

Five other Filipino box in the week-long singlon participated in by eight countries fell to superior foes and questionable officiating.

Mjunghi Wanie Pedo, Thanks Mhor Amad gold medalist, fought hard but bar to bantamweight Sulaiddon Dzaiyeon of Malaysia, 13-9.

Also losing their first round matches were light-flyweight Harry Tolentino, featherweight Claudio Basaro, lightweight Dominel Sinodlo and rookie Wilfredo Lopez.

Suprez and Lopez, both greenhorns in international events, lost to Russian Evgeniy Gradovich and Ukrainian Aleksandr Gvozdyk respectively.

Gradovich, Gvozdyk and Suprez won gold.

Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny V. Lopez said the experience will serve the nationals well as they prepare for the World Championships in October.

"The Ukraine results showed that making it to the Olympics isn't a stroll in the park," said Lopez, whose team's trip was supported by Pacific Heights and Cebu Philippine Sports Commission.

Dennis U. Divas, Inquirer Libre sports editor

BUSINESS

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Gov't warns banks against hoarding of RTBs

TRICYCLES may now be converted into autogas-fuel vehicles. EALDEN/INQ

Says program must benefit small investors

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAU OF THE TREASURY HAS WARNED banks that it would impose penalties on those who fail to sell the required amount of retail treasury bonds (RTBs) to small investors.

At the sideline of the treasurer briefing yesterday on the RTB issuance, Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said government securities eligible dealers (GSEDs)—made up mostly of banks—were required to sell at least 50 percent of the RTBs they would get from the government to small investors.

Tan said those who fail to meet the required volume of sale to small investors would not be paid their commissions. GSEDs that are selling agents for the RTBs will get a commission equivalent to 75 basis points or 75 centavos per P100 worth of RTBs to be awarded to them.

A bank is required to get a minimum P800 million worth of RTBs to be qualified as a selling agent for the government securities.

Tan, who also serves as officer-in-charge of the Bureau of the Treasury, said GSEDs who fail to comply with the requirements also faced the threat of being banned as sellers of government securities.

"One of the objectives of the issuance of RTBs is to give an opportunity for small investors to invest in government securities," Tan said.

Unlike regular government bonds, RTBs value is small in nature because the minimum investment requirement is only P5,000.

The auction for the RTBs will be held on Monday and the get-

BOTTOM

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■ PAL Holdings to hike stake in air carrier to 84% /B3

■ Stocks hit highs despite worries /B7

CURRENCIES

LAST PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P44.089 =

as of 4 p.m., July 20, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares up on Wall St. record rise

SHARE PRICES IN EUROPE AND AFRICA ROSE on Thursday, with sentiment getting a boost from Wall Street's record-high overnight finishes and...

The composite index rose 36.37 points to 3,330.38, off the day's high of 3,340.21. The all-share index rose 0.36 points to 1,431.50. There were 94 gainers and 58 losers, with 61 stocks unchanged.

Volume was 2.4 billion shares worth P4.2 billion.

"Volumes were the lowest of the ongoing share offerings but looking at the technical side...

SHARES B3

Total readies plan to make tricycles run on LPG

By Abigail L. Ho

[illegible] (PHILIPPINES) CORP. is preparing to pilot an autogas program for tricycles in a bid to tap the 1.3-million tricycle market in the country.

Toni Philippines president and managing director Anna Whitehouse said the company's autogas business was "doing quite well" and topping the tricycle market was a logical next step for the oil firm to take.

"We now have five stations offering autogas, and we'll have more in the coming months. We're currently doing a pilot study on autogas for tricycles. We'll be ready with the pilot program soon," she said.

Should all go well with the study, she said the pilot program would start within the year in Mandaluyong.

In an earlier interview, she said there were more than 1.3 million tricycle nationwide that could be converted into autogas-fed vehicles.

Not only would this provide another revenue stream for Total, but it would also help better the environment as emissions of carbon hydrocarbons would be significantly reduced when tricycles shift to autogas from gasoline, she said.

TOTAL B3

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cor. General Luna St., Intramuros, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
MITSUI & CO. LTD. (MANILA BRANCH) [illegible]	Tomoo Date	General Manager, Mineral and Metal Resources Division
WE ARE THE WORLD PHONE TOUR CORP. [illegible]	Eveline Lee	Tour Coordinator
LA CONSOLACION COLLEGE MANILA Intramuros, Manila	Abigail Zhang	College Faculty
LA CONSOLACION COLLEGE MANILA Intramuros, Manila	Norman Chu	College Faculty
LA CONSOLACION COLLEGE MANILA Intramuros, Manila	Jin Qiu	College Faculty
NOVICE INC. [illegible]	Richard Dean Shipley	Country Manager
MAPUA ENGLISH TRAINING CENTER, INC. [illegible]	Agustinus Lee	Marketing Manager
MAPUA ENGLISH TRAINING CENTER, INC. [illegible]	Sangkeun Lee	General Manager
KORNET EXPRESS COURIER SERVICES INC. [illegible]	Sang Kyung Nam	General Manager
HYAD ASIA INC. [illegible]	Whitee Hong	Human Vision Support
DEL 1 ACTIVITY NETWORK SYSTEM (MANIL, INC. [illegible]	Mi Hwa Jung	Asst. Finance Manager
MONDE-NISSIN CORPORATION [illegible]	Ryu Kyung Chul	Consultant Products Research & Development
WON KWANG INTERNATIONAL TRADING CORPORATION [illegible]	Sangkun Lee	Manager
PHILSUPE SERVICES, INC. [illegible]	Masahiro Fukahara	Agriculture
FESTO, INC FESTO HOLDINGS, INC. [illegible]	John Cheng	General Manager & Director/Treasurer
LUBE VALLEY TRADING LTD. CO. [illegible]	Mingshi Liu	Assistant Manager-Sales
JOLIBEE KARAOKE BAR AND RESTAURANT INC. [illegible]	Ling Hsin Kuo	General Manager
YOSHIN TRAVEL & TOURS CORP. [illegible]	Xiaoping Chu	Sales Consultant
AMERICAN MEDICAL COSMETIC CARE CORP. [illegible]	Sung Seok Yun	General Manager
KOREA-MANILA FOOD LINK CORP. [illegible]	Kyunsoo Kang	Quick Assistant (Mess)
ELITE CONSTRUCTION PRODUCTS PHIL. CORP. [illegible]	Hiroaki Fuse	General Manager
BAYSIDE TECHNOLOGIES, INC. [illegible]	Yuanan Tang	Chinese Customer Support Supervisor
BAYSIDE TECHNOLOGIES, INC. [illegible]	Yude Chen	Chinese Customer Support Associate
SEE U LOVE TRAVEL TOURS & CONSULTING SERVICES INC. [illegible]	Chang Kuei Hsien	Marketing Manager
APAC CUSTOMER SERVICES, INC. - PHILIPPINE BRANCH [illegible]	Isidro Dulat Gallo	IT and Country Manager
NORTH SEA MARINE SERVICES CORPORATION [illegible]	Sebastian Lee Lucas Hyppia	Hotel Consultant
INTERNATIONAL ROYAL GOLF & CASA MONEY CHANGER [illegible]	Fun Jou Hsieh	President

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned applications, please communicate with the Regional Director.

ISABEL S. BUCANAN-DE FIGUEIRA
Acting Regional Director

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor Market Situationer and Productivity. For more information, please call 735-4241 to 243-5845.

B1 **BUSINESS** SATURDAY, JULY 21, 2007

IT firm eyes public offering

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lanzot

TECHNOLOGY TRADING CORPORATION (TechnoTrade Inc. aims to raise as much as P41.6 million from a proposed initial public offering of 4 million shares.

In documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), TTC Placido said it planned to offer the shares at between P7.80 and P9.00 each.

Of the proposed offer size, 1.3 million shares will be issued to holders of non-shares and 2.7 million will be reserved for the treasury shares through a primary offer.

The shares will represent 10 percent of the company's authorized capital of 20 million shares. The proceeds will be used to fund the completion of the development of the Web-based school management system in core primary and secondary levels of education, and the company's collaboration on technology innovation to strengthen the company's competence in the new and latest versions of Microsoft technologies.

The company was incorporated in April 1999 to offer training and consulting services and Microsoft-based solutions to Microsoft customers in the country.

As part of its business solutions portfolio, the company launched E-Wizard, a computer-assisted school management system that will cater to the tertiary levels of education.

The company's revenues grew from P422.7 million in 2005 to P510.5 million in 2006, or a compounded annual rate of 10 percent. Net income after tax during the same period rose to P5.5 million in 2006 from P200,000 in 2005.

Easycall raises stake in ePerformax

By Rica T. Chikiamco

EASYCALL SAID IT WAS INCREASING ITS equity stake in ePerformax Global Content Corp. by buying P10.35 million worth of shares in the latter's unit.

In an earlier disclosure, ePerformax said it will be distributing stock dividends worth P17.2 million to qualified stockholders.

Easycall investments said CEO Cecilio Arevalo Jr. said in a letter to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the company's board of directors has approved the stock dividends.

Security said the dividends would make up 42.48 percent of total stockholders' equity as of Dec. 31, 2006, unless ePerformax P171.0 million is represents 100 percent of the entire issue's appropriated retained earnings as of end 2006.

Stockholders of record as of June 30 can avail themselves of the dividends.

Last year, Easycall formed PEGasus using to the disposition of some of its assets. Easycall said that as a result of the spinoff performance of ePerformax, the company through Transactional Dynamics Corp., would be spending some $1 million to Worldlink Global as a result site in Metro Manila where its contact center early next year.

The call center's facility is located at the 8th Buendia Center in Makati.

The first set of ePerformax has nine operational floors at 8th Buendia Center. It has a maximum capacity of 1,830 seats, more than 1,500 employees and more than 250 trainees.

7-Eleven to open 150 stores

PHILIPPINE SEVEN CORP. (PSC), OPERATOR of the 7-Eleven chain of 24-hour convenience stores in the country, is expecting to open 150 more stores starting this year until 2008, company president Joel Victor Briones said.

Briones said that PSC would put up 75 new stores this year and another 60 stores in 2008. The budget for each store is about P4.5 million.

Of the total number to be opened, about half will be franchised and the rest will be owned by the company.

Aside from the new stores to Metro Manila, the company also plans to open in Luzon, Davao provinces and in Cebu province.

Sales from the stores have been positive so far this year, largely driven by the company's beverage brands. Last year, PSC focused on rebuilding its cold soft drinks "Gulp" and "Slurpee" brands.

This year, the company said it would expand its cup drinks line to include hot beverages like coffee. This line has done well in 7-Eleven stores in the United States and Mexico as they offered customers in the morning and during rainy months when demand for cold drinks weakens.

PSC reported in an income gave 43 percent to P2.66 billion in 2006 from P1.86 billion in 2005.

PSC said that for the past four years, it has continued to post profits since suffering losses of P2.2 billion in 2004.

PSC also said it has transformed itself into a franchise organization. As of mid-2006, its number of franchised stores reached 120, or 42.00 percent of total existing stores. This was double-digits higher than the 31 percent in 2005 and 20 percent in 2004, it said in a financial report to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

PAL Holdings to hike stake in air carrier to 84%

Firm streamlines ownership to appeal to creditors

By Rica T. Olchondra

LISTED FIRM PAL HOLDINGS INC. MOVED to acquire more direct shares in Philippine Airlines (PAL), simplifying its ownership of the air carrier to make it more bankable to creditors.

PAL Holdings disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that it obtained board approval to directly acquire PAL shares from several holding companies, as well as 0.5 percent of shares from individuals, including magnate Lucio Tan.

Tan controls both PAL and PAL Holdings.

"At the end of the exercise, PAL Holdings will own 83.47 percent of PAL and will own most of those shares directly," PAL president Jaime Bautista said yesterday in a briefing. Previously, it indirectly owned 54.67 percent. The simplification and increased holdings will make PAL more bankable to creditors.

PAL Holdings said the shares totaling P6.8 billion are equivalent to 61.57 percent of PAL's issued and outstanding shares.

The six holding companies are Anoa Holdings Inc., Cebu Pacific Holdings Inc., Pal Holdings Inc., Network Holdings and Equities Inc., Sierra Holdings and Equities Inc. and Manuel Holdings Corp.

The holding company will also acquire shares owned by the six holding companies in PR Holdings, totaling 10.8 million shares. This is equivalent to 82.3 percent of PR Holdings' outstanding common shares.

Earlier this month, PAL Holdings told the local bourse that it is converting receivables in Network Holdings and Equities Inc., Anoa Holdings Inc., Cebu Pacific Holdings Inc., Pal Holdings Inc. and Sierra Holdings and Equities Inc. into paid-in capital.

PAL Holdings said it will remove the subscribers' total debt of P2.9 billion into additional paid-in capital in its subsidiary corporations.

The holding company will also assume the firm firms' combined P3.4 billion debt to Transnational Holdings Corp., a majority stakeholder in the parent company.

Transnational, being both a creditor and a controlling stakeholder in PAL Holdings, agreed to turn the P3.4 billion receivables into paid-in capital in the holding company.

CONSTRUCTION BOOM
Workers toil precariously on a high-rise site in Pasay City. The country is currently in the throes of a construction boom, fueled mostly by remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

US firm commits more investments

SYKONIQ LISTED LAWSOFT SOFTWARE HAS committed to invest some $6 million in the next two to three months, in addition to the $15 million it has already sunk into six Philippine facilities in less than two years.

In an interview with reporters, Edwin Chow, general manager of Lawsoft's Philippine Solutions and Services Center (PSSC), said the new investment would support the company's plans to bid for expand here.

He refused that when the US-based firm decided to shift its Asia-Pacific hub from India to the Philippines in 2005, the local Lawsoft team was only had 20 employees up to the end of 2006.

By end-March, the PSSC already had around 200 employees, by end-June 400 employees and, to date, close to 500 employees, he said.

"We currently have the largest pool of [enterprise resource planning] professionals in the country," he said. "We plan to grow to 950 employees at the end-'08 mark."

With the company's fast expansion, he said, investments would also have to be poured in to new facilities.

A new facility located at One World Square within the Fort Bonifacio Global City is now on its way to completion.

Chow said the new four office could meet around 1,500 employees. It would be one of only two PSSC sites that Lawson would maintain, based on current plans.

The company currently has offices at the Net-Two Center also within the Global City in Taguig (2,000 seats), Ecoprime Center in Ayala ave., Makati (165 seats) and Goodland Plaza in Bacolod, Makati (170 seats).

"The additional $6-million investments is only for capital expenditures," he said. "Our operational budget is around $10 million a year, to grow to $20 million by mid-2008. We're investing heavily in our management levels."

Abigail L. Ho

RIM sees subscriber base growing by 1.2M

RESEARCH IN MOTION (RIM) IS WOOING TO NOT 1.2 million subscribers by offering a combination of corporate and consumer features, offered in partnership with Globe Telecom.

RIM says more features open to the Philippines and the rest of that were consumer friendly promotions such as the phone camera and headset jack for listening to music.

In response to demand, RIM and Globe on Thursday launched the BlackBerry Curve, also known as the 8300. RIM included a 2-megapixel camera, more multimedia features, and even a headset jack to cater to the "consumer needs" of business users. Globe, meanwhile, has integrated such applications such as furniture access.

RIM's vice president for Asia Pacific Yu'ai Leonel Dai business users have always been the primary users of BlackBerry in the Philippines, but the integration of more consumer-centered features expands the handset's appeal to consumer-centric users.

"Corporate users are also consumers," he told reporters. "They have a life, too, outside of business. The Curve enables them to balance work and home life, for example, letting them take pictures to send home when they are on a trip. But even if are added multimedia features, the Curve is still a business phone. We will be adding more consumer features into the device."

Globe is working with potential partners for integrating a wider range of corporate applications to the BlackBerry and Louie Villanueva, Integrated Business director for Globe's Enterprise Business Group. Rica T. Olchondra

PNOC-EDC eyes biodiesel plant in Negros Oriental

By Abigail L. Ho

IN AN EFFORT TO PROMOTE the use of alternative fuels, PNOC Energy Development Corp. (PNOC EDC) is looking at establishing a coco-based-fuel plant within its head here in Negros Occidental production (NGO) facility.

PNOC EDC president and chief executive Paul Aguirre said that, as early as 2004, the firm's Energy Research and Development Department had already succeeded in developing a small-scale plant producing coco methyl ester (CME).

The plant's capacity of around 600 liters of CME a month is being used to supply the needs of PNOC-EDC's head office at the Port Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Aguirre said PNOC EDC's leaders and administration group had also been facilitating the use of CME in some of the company's project sites.

"This year, we will also pilot a CME plant to our host here in Negros geothermal production field to supply the requirements of its vehicle fleet," he said in a presentation at the League of Corporate Foundation's CSR Expo 2007. "As a livelihood option, we have discussed with the provincial government of Negros Occidental the possibility of making use the [coco] by-product to benefit Dumaguete City and nearby urban centers."

Gov't warns banks against hoarding of RTBs

From page B1

treasurer is selling a minimum of P6 billion worth of three- and five-year RTBs.

Rolando Joaquiñez Bhoju, executive vice president of First Metro Investment Corp., said the government was expecting as much as P40 billion worth of bids for the RTBs.

First Metro Investment Corp. and BPI Capital Corp. were tapped by the government as series of joint managers for the RTBs.

Tan said the Treasury would allow interest rate on the RTBs to be as per with secondary market rates for government securities of comparable tenors. An industry player said three-year bonds were fetching 6.95 percent, while five-year bonds were trading at 7.21 percent in the secondary market.

Tan said the government expects to generate substantial interest in the RTBs since there were P2.1 billion worth of RTBs that matured last Monday. He said the government expected some of the holders reinvest their cash.

The amount of RTBs to be sold this month is the part of the government's domestic borrowing program of P268 billion for the year.

The total borrowing program is on top of the $2.466 billion worth of foreign borrowings also slated for this year. Of the foreign borrowings, $1 billion was raised in January this year through the issuance of sovereign bonds. The balance will come in the form of official development assistance from multilateral and bilateral lenders.

Total readies plan to make tricycles run on LPG

From page B1

"By converting to auto-LPG, tricycles can reduce emissions by at least 75 percent," she said. "We are currently working with the Department of Energy in developing policies and standards for auto-LPG for tricycles."

The DOE has already come out with guidelines in selling autogas to three selected refilling stations, including the standards for converting such vehicles from gasoline to autogas.

Whichever said similar guidelines should be put in place for tricycles.

"We're working with the DOE now regarding that. Our target is to have those standards ready toward the end of the year," she said.

She said that Total, in cooperation with the local government of Mandaluyong, had started a pilot program that involved the conversion of six tricycles to autogas.

"We're just conducting a trial here, but this should go beyond the pilot phase when we have the standards in place," she said. "While working on the guidelines, we're also working with banks for possible financing for tricycle owners who may want to convert."

She said it would cost between P30,000 and P35,000 to convert a tricycle into autogas. Tricycle owners can recover their investment in the conversion of their vehicles within three to six months.

Shares up on Wall St. record rise

From page B1

the market's rebound seems to be sustainable after the 3,700 points support level was offered," said Ben Rodrigo of Integral Securities.

He said investors will continue to take their cue from Wall Street's performance but they are unlikely to make aggressive moves while waiting for more Philippine companies to release second-quarter results. (See related story on Page B7.)

Ayala Corp. rose P3.5 to P370.

Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., the nation's biggest lender by assets, jumped P1.50 to P69.50.

Pushing the trend, top-ranked Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was down P30 or P2,000 on profit-taking after hitting record highs recently.

San Miguel Corp. common and B shares unchanged at P79 and P82.50, respectively. AFP

SCIENCE/HEALTH

Lizy Cesar D. Manganaan

Phytonutrients will prevent disease, says Nutrilite

By Tonyo B. Salazar
Contributor

COLLEEN CARRIEU, NUtrilite Health Institute's research scientist, says: "It's pretty miraculous that the human body functions the way it does, but any point of the process could go wrong at any point in time. Phytonutrients help in support that process goes on smoothly."

She adds that phytochemicals protect us from free radicals.

Phytochemicals, also called phytochemicals, are compounds in plant-derived foods that have biological activity in the body. Phytochemicals naturally occur in vegetables and fruits.

"Free radicals are all around us. And we can't escape them. They are on cigarette smoke, sunlight, in the air you breathe out of your car, in the environment. It says, chemicals such as pesticides, and even when we exercise," she says.

According to Carlieu, organic plants, especially those grown by Nutrilite, eliminate the free radicals. "The plants that we cultivate in the soil where they are grown. And through organic plants do not necessarily have added nutritional value, they help fight the company's "natural organic ability" for its consumers.

She also does not take any false promises about Nutrilite's products. The phytonutrient food supplements would only work best, she says, when combined with exercise, balanced diet, hygiene and a positive attitude.

Personalized nutrition

Nutrilite Health Institute president Carol A. "Ann" Berkeburg, a biochemist, says "personalized" nutrition is the company's biggest opportunity so far. This involves genetics and the family doctor's knowledge of how the behaviors of each customer of the family, is growing trend in the United States, the company's combination of genetics and health risk assessment (asking mostly input questions) could also gain a foothold in countries such as Japan and China, according to Berkeburg.

He says: "Information, such as cholesterol and blood pressure levels contained in the health assessment portfolio, added with the genetic information, can be developed into algorithms, and the company goes to work on it. Out of that comes recommendations for customers."

Berkeburg further explains that the health recommendation, in turn, can be placed on the individual's "shopping cart" as his computer file at Nutrilite. "For example, those who can use recommended Nutrilite products, perhaps Omni, gets the person's name and shows and how much he should have it."

"Nowadays the most frequent question I get from people is 'What do I need?' 'about will you tell me what I need if you undergo an assessment," he says.

Genetic test as preventive tool

With the planned rollout in Japan, Russia and China, Nutrilite has expanded its genetic portfolio by partnering with Interlinked Genetics, one of the top biotech companies in the States.

Berkeburg says: "Genetics is complex, but testing is relatively simple. You from the cheek using cotton swabs, put your results into the relevant requested envelope, and send it to a genetic testing lab. That genetic testing lab looks those cells for a number of items around the world will soon be individual's genotype and will say which diseases you are likely predisposed to."

He also understands the apprehensions of the people. Such topics as this would generate a lot of questions as a prerequisite tool to help people have a broadened view before. We're not talking about changing people's genes."

All we want to do is use the knowledge to help identify values that form optimal health programs to live each individual," he adds.

Berkeburg says the company's next technology regulation roadmap is also necessary to design the parameters of the technology.

It's most only on supply of Nutrilite food supplements in the Philippines, log on to http://www.amway.com.ph.

Ban smoking advertisements (please!)

By Rahul R. Gandhi, MD

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BOY FOR millions and for your dream house and dream car?

This was the message of a full-page ad in full color which one placed to over a hundred times recently. I don't much information or listen to the radio, that much but I figure these must be similar ads blasting the same message in these media.

What do you have to do to qualify

MEDICAL FILES

to "win this grand prize." All you have to do is buy a particular cigarette brand and join the lift. And by using this cigarette you lose, the more chances you have of winning this amazing prize which many won't come in a lifetime of hard work.

Promo gimmicks

I can understand that our government is easy prey to the lure and has to be safe of cigarettes as any substance although it has been proven beyond any reasonable doubt that a cost to the country's health is financial. Losing it to advertise includes and seven regular monitoring promotions is impossible to lure smokers, it is true) are talented understanding.

Allowing these tall and chalk-lying promotions is like surveying the next cigarette. It's time to have more people dying of cancers, heart attacks and strokes and more smoking prohibitors undergoing emergency surgery for dissecting teeth-metal pins.

Survey results

There's no denying that fact and art, good or bad, when advertised and last hours. Medical experiments had buyers in a subtle manner, that makes even hesitates more powerful. It's no wonder why 10 out of 10,000 ignore still smoke, based on the results of the National Youth Survey. Health Survey conducted by a joint effort of more than 15 medical organizations and the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology. Dr. Eraine Morales, medical director of Manila Doctor's Hospital, was the prime mover in this survey.

More than half (50.3 percent) of adult males are still smoking based on the FHSurvey results. Prevalence in adult male smokers even increased from 53.8 percent in 1998 to 56.3 percent during the same period. Females are quickly more health conscious and the prevalence of female smokers slightly decreased from 12.6 to 12.1 percent.

Strict measures

"We're smoking more compared to Singaporeans and Australians," Dr. Morales says. The reported prevalence of smoking in Singapore and the United States is 24.2 percent and 20.1 percent, respectively. It is no wonder that strict antismoking measures have been taken by Singapore and Australia.

In the United States, various measures on smoking are implemented at the state or municipal level, not by the federal government therefore, smoking policies are instituted on a smaller scale. Some cities, for example, have even outlawed smoking in restaurants unless it's a single-detached establishment. And smokers can only smoke in their yellow-lit gardens.

Education campaigns

Most of us in the antismoke medical organizations spend time and resources to educate the public to prevent and conduct heated conferences to not listen such as hypertension, diabetes and cholesterol problems. But I personally feel diseased of having to spend time and money to conduct antismoke campaigns, if the prevalence of smoking is not reduced, there will be no significant impact on the incidence of cardiovascular diseases and cancers. Hopefully we will have the same rate of heart attacks, strokes and the disturbing statistic mentioned at least three times.

It's time to begin more critical legislative initiatives of our health advocacy campaigns must achieve, that would be to convince Filipinos to quit smoking and prevent our adolescents population—higher value-added taxes on smoking, ads on packs for smokers and their respective companies—from ever getting their first puff.

Best Pinoy Science of 2006

EUREKA!

JENNIFER N. LEE-CHUA

THREE DECADES AGO THE NATIONAL Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) was established as the government's highest recognition and advisory body on it and 1 three of the country's top scientists in the agricultural, biological, chemical, mathematical, physical, engineering, health and social sciences.

Last week, at the conclusion of the NAST annual meeting at the Manila Hotel, these same awardees the best of Pinoy science in 2006.

Outstanding books

Agriculture: "Soil Harvest: Quantifying the Effect of Plant Residues on Major Crops in the Philippines," by Arsilito Bernardo, and "Food Carrying and Income-generating Capacities of the Rice Farms," by Leonardo Gonzales, Leonardo Sebastian and Antonio Francisco

Social Sciences: "2000 Philippine Human Development Report: Peace, Human Security and Human Development in the Philippines," by Emmanuel de Dios, Solomon Santos Jr., Toby Melissa Monsod and Severino Salvador Calubaquib, "Winning the Water War: Watersheds, Water Policies and Water Institutions," by Agnes Rola, Herminia Francisco and Rodelio Lapitan

Outstanding papers

Agriculture: "Enhanced Developmental Competence of Buffalo Oocytes in the Presence of Hormones and Epidermal Growth Factor during In Vitro Maturation," by Rhodora Abenoja, Edwin Andrew Quintella Bacani, Rodelio de Vera and Libertado Cruz, and "The Effect of Different Milling Times of Grain from Different Milling Machines on the Milling Recovery and Milling of Eight Cavendish cultivars," by Maria Elena Sison, Glenn Gregorio and Shirley Mendoza

Biology: "A Decision to Support Health for Conserving Genetic of Indigenous Knowledge, Biodiversity Considerations," by Wilfredo Lynette Pedro, Willy Campos, Gil Cortez and Maria Antoinette Rodeo; "Identification and Characterization of Bacteriocin-Like Inhibitory Substance (BLIS) Produced by Lactic Acid Bacteria Isolated from Silurus spp. (Hito) Intestine from the Philippines," by Charissa Gracia Bautista, Wenresco Elagado and Ma. Rebecca Asuncion Miranda, and "Ethnobotanical Inventory of Dry Forests of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region," by Henry Romero and Olga Ramirez

Maths: "On Fermat's Lemma of Arithmetic Progression and Applications to the Theory of Numbers," by Nilo Limosnero, and "Sobre Los Numeros de Ramsey"

Chemistry: "Biosynthesis of the Gallic Cluster of Plant Aspartic L," by Marissa Noel and Hilton Deoff

Engineering and Technology: "Logit Choice Models and Utility Ranking of Transport Modes in Metro Manila," by Ma. Lourdes Jiminez, Alejandro Ir. and Hazel Christopher Tagaloo; "Modernization of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) Waste Disposal in the Philippines," by Thaddeus Bonifacio, Rodolfo Bonifacio, Joseph Bonifacio and Ernest Mario Talavera; and "Degradation of Polychlorinated Biphenyls in Waste Mineral Using IN-VESSEL Effect of Oxidant Concentration and Temperature," by Amanda Cisneros, Lenadia Abella and Susan Gallardo.

Health: "The Philippine College of Surgeons' Retrospective Study," by Cesario Arcilla, Antonio Tuble, Orestes Abesamis, Leonard Adriano, Miguel Mendoza, Jose Ann Benavidez and Geronimo de Jesus Jr.

Humanities: "A Bonga-based GARCH-in-dicated for Forecasting Financial Volatility," by Dennis Mapa

Talent Search for Young Scientists

Regina Joy Gregorio (chemistry) of the Ateneo de Manila University won the Talent Search for Young Scientists (TSYS) competition. Gregorio, who graduated from the Philippine Science High School system's Eastern Visayas (applied plant sciences) of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and Consuelo BS. Bala Jr. (computer science) of De La Salle University.

Many runner-up Meister (biology) of the University of the Philippines (UP) in Diliman and Benedicto Milan (computer science) of Jose Rizal University garnered the NAST High School Science Achievement Award.

Christopher Bautista (physics) of the Central Mindoro Institute Foundation, Leonardo Lyceum Twelve runners-up admitted to a 4-UP Diliman, and Adlai Bernardo (physics) from Bulacan (geology) of De La Salle University were inducted into NAST University Right (genetics) of the ateneo. The World Vegetable Center in Taiwan became a NAST corresponding member.

Last Tuesday in Cebu City, Gonzales, I also honored 20 men and women who became our award in each of the awarding living Scientists.

Congratulations, congratulations!

Contact the author at jlnchua@yahoo.com.

New dengue test kit makes early detection possible

By Charles E. Rubio

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IS ONCE again on the warpath against dengue, embarking on a renewed intensive education campaign in reaction to the rising number of cases being reported around the country.

As early as Jan. 1, there were 2,000 cases, Jan. 2 to June 2, which is 68 of patients more than the 6,000 reported during the same period last year.

Although most of those diagnosed individuals still recover without serious results, the health department warned that some of them still developed dengue hemorrhagic fever that causes massive bleeding and other deadly complications.

At present, the only method of controlling or preventing dengue and dengue hemorrhagic fever is to combat the mosquitoes that carry them as well as to undertake medical treatment, especially when there is bleeding, high fever, headaches, pain and muscle aches, vomiting and rashes, already known to secondary.

No specific treatment

Unfortunately there is no specific treatment for dengue fever, more so to its more serious counterpart, the dengue hemorrhagic form because the infection could come from any of the four strains of virus that causes dengue (and transmitted by a mosquito of a certain type).

Because of this, early detection of the presence of dengue infection is crucial considering that only a timely form of management by an experienced medical practitioner could increase a patient's chance of recovery from the potentially deadly infection.

The common test used to detect dengue infection is confirming the presence of antibodies which are produced by or 10 days after the onset of fever by cases of primary infections and four to five days in cases of secondary infections.

Not early enough

Lifeline Diagnostics Supplies Inc., exclusive distributor of this Rad brand of products in the Philippines, believes these testing methods are not to be too helpful if early diagnosis is desired.

To address this challenge, the company introduced in the country a new dengue test kit that could detect the virus from the first day of symptoms.

The Platelia Dengue NS1 Antigen test kit makes earlier detection possible as it tests for a certain dengue virus antigen (NS1) antigen. Results are said to be available in as short as one hour, while results are available in one day.

The company believes this new test would not only prevent further epidemics cases but also reduce the number of deaths because it can be limited much earlier and enable them to provide the best medical care possible.

Stocks hit highs despite worries

LONDON—WORLD STOCKS hit another all-time high on Friday as investors set aside worries about the credit market to focus on corporate earnings and a solid global economic backdrop.

MSCI's main world stock index was briefly above its previous record, touched on Monday as European and Japanese shares added to Wall Street's overnight gains.

But concerns about securities based on US subprime mortgages, which ranger less credit-worthy borrowers, kept the dollar near six-month lows against the euro and the cost of insuring debt European corporate debt rose.

The Times Crossover index, the most widely watched indicator of European credit sentiment, widened to one of its least points since it was launched in March.

"What we have seen in the recent is this divergent attitude where you can equities trade calmly pushing US equities up and up ... and the banks looking at the credit market contagion," said Ian Harris, Equities Investment strategist at T Investment Management.

US Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke said on Thursday that the economic outlook remained solid despite large losses suffered by US banks on US$100 billion and threatens consumer spending.

Equity markets, however, focused on a positive climate for company earnings.

The FTSEurofirst 300 index of top European shares was up 0.2 percent. London's FTSE 100 index rose 0.6 percent, while Frankfurt's DAX was up 0.1 percent and Paris' CAC-40 increased 0.2 percent.

Earlier, Japan's Nikkei closed up 0.23 percent or 41.56 points to 18,137.93. The broader Topix index added 10.68 percent to 1,796.17.

The dollar hovered near its record low against the euro while the Australian and New Zealand dollars gained as investors flocked to higher-yielding currencies.

The euro was steady at $1.3806, within sight of a record high of $1.3833 hit earlier this week when the dollar fell broadly on subprime worries.

Trade was also steady at 163.90 yen, its strongest level since mid-1999. Also, the New Zealand dollar hit a peak of 97.34 us, a level not seen in 21 years.

Credit worries gave some support to safe-haven government bonds.

Treasury yields, which move inverse to prices, were 3.8 basis points lower at 4.987 percent, while the two-year note-sensitive five-year yield was 3.6 basis points lower at 4.489 percent. *Reuters*

A BILLBOARD announces the closing price of the Dow Jones Industrial Average at Pfizer Pods, Thursday July 19, 2007. Wall Street reclaimed its just another record on Thursday with the Dow Jones industrials closing above 14,000 for the first time.

Oil takes pause after rise to near record

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES WERE steady on Friday after two days of solid gains, lowered by concern that slowdowns economic growth will more supplies already cleared by US refinery trip-ups and African export disruptions.

London Brent crude for September was down 3 cents at $77.67 in early trade after the afternoon, one dollar below its all-time record high of $78.09 reached last August.

Brent has rallied more than $1 in the two days following US government data on Wednesday showing crude fuel stocks.

US light crude for August delivery, which expires later on Friday was down 4 cents at $75.80 is based, after having settled 49 cents higher at $75.00 a barrel on Thursday.

Oil demand seems to be an issue. There is a feeling that the market will become tighter and there is concern about prompt supplies," said Tony Hanon, risk management executive at Tokyo-based Mitsubishi.

Economic growth in China, the world's second largest consumer, accelerated to 11.9 percent on the second quarter, a 11 1/2-year high, and crude imports for June rose 20 percent from a year ago.

Other news economist are also expressing resident in surging energy prices. Crude imports by South Korea, the world's fourth largest buyer, rose 3.6 percent from a year ago in June.

Middle strong demand in the United States, coupled with a summer of heightened refinery hiccups, has stoked investment in the world's biggest oil user in the midst of the summer season.

Gasoline stocks fell by a hefty 2.4 million barrels, while analysts ended July 13, while crude stocks, still more than two highs, fell for the second week in a row.

Following a surge in speculative buying seen late June, the largest of even modest supply disruptions has been magnified.

Open lies, meanwhile, showed no sign of widening its output curbs in place since last Monday, fearful of shunning already hefty crude inventories could further.

"Once a holding up the you. They opened up the taps last year and the result was a large build in inventories by the end of the summer. They will be very economical this year," Hanon said. *Reuters*

GM, Toyota swap lead in global auto market

TOKYO—GENERAL MOTORS regained the crown as world's number one for the second quarter of 2007, reselling Toyota Motor, but its Japanese rival came out on top for the first half of the year.

Toyota said Friday that it had sold 2.35 million vehicles worldwide between January and June, slipping behind Americ based GM, which reported Thursday it had sold 2.41 million in the same period.

"GM still is the top automaker in the United States, supported by many fans," and Toyota Motors, no rate analyst at Fitch Ratings.

"The company showed its true, dominant power" in the second quarter, he said.

But thanks to a strong first quarter, Toyota beat GM for the annual sales number by June as a whole, selling 4.71 million units against GM's 4.67 million.

Toyota is enjoying brisk demand, particularly in the United States, as higher prices at the fuel pump boost demand for compact cars, small sport utility vehicles and hybrids which use a mix of electricity and petrol.

GM has been struggling to maintain domestic momentum, with its US sales sliding 2.4 percent in June to 329,399 vehicles, even as Toyota's sales in the world's largest economy jumped 6.3 percent to 240,739.

Toyota has been careful not to get ahead its rapid growth, fearing a protectionist backlash as seen in the United States in the 1980s.

Toyota was a pioneer of environmentally friendly hybrids, which pr ovided a major hit in the United States, where new automakers have spent the last decade focusing on gas-guzzling sports utility vehicles.

Toyota, which marks the 70th anniversary of its founding this year, sold 5.62 million vehicles in the last fiscal year to March, up 6.9 percent. It expects to sell 6.04 million cars and trucks in 2007. *AFP*

CHRISTOPHER ALLAN TENGCO of Milltown, New Jersey, son of Dr. Rodolfo Tengco and Dr. Melinda Tenorio-Tengco, graduated cum laude from Tulane University Freeman School of Business, New Orleans, Louisiana on May 19, 2007. He majored in Finance and Accounting. He is working now for Enrich Well Oil Company as a Supply Purchaser.

He is the grandson of Domingo & Irene Tengco of Uliana, Tagaig City and the late Adrian & Modesta Tenorio of Balanga, Bataan.

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Transmission Corporation, through its duly-authorized Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders and prequalified by the Philippine Construction Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the transmission project(s):

Name of Contract	Relocation of Steel Poles Affected by Expressway Project of the Republic of the Philippines (DPWH) for Transmission Line Uprating of Existing Steel Poles at Bonanza-Balintawak 230kV Transmission Line
Location	Paranaque and Bulacan Provinces, Island of Luzon
Brief Description	Relocation and Construction of the Steel Pole/Tower Structures and Reconductoring of Existing Steel Poles at Bonanza-Balintawak 230kV Transmission Line
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P 61,000,000.00
Contract Duration	180 Days

Pre-PCAB License and Registration Particulars required should be as follows:

License Particular	at least Category 'A'
Registration Particular	as basic 'Medium B' ... No. Electrical Works

Prospective bidders should have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment listed in the Eligibility Forms available for the prequalification of the bids. Bidders may inspect the documents listed for criteria in the Eligibility Check Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the bidders using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

All particulars relative to Eligibility Requirement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the Revised Implementing Rules of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

	BAC Activities	Schedule
1.	Issuance of Eligibility Forms	July 23, 2007
2.	Pre-Eligibility Conference	August 1, 2007
3.	Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Documents	August 10, 2007
4.	Issuance of Bid Documents	August 20, 2007
5.	Pre-bid Conference	September 4, 2007
6.	Submission and Opening of Bids	September 18, 2007

The BAC will open in prospective bidders' Eligibility Forms at **9/F/BO, Ground Floor, Treasury Main Building, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road Diliman, Quezon City, 1100**, upon their payment of a non-refundable fee of **P1,000.00** to the **National Transmission Corporation Cashier**. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the details of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **P15,000.00** to the **National Transmission Corporation Cashier**.

The **National Transmission Corporation** assumes no responsibility, whatsoever, for any amount or value of materially evidence for any materials incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ATTY. NOEL C. DE LEON
BAC Chairman

(PN) — July 21 & 28, 2007

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Transformer Line Materials and Construction of Substation – Clark 230kV Transformation Line Project

(Sgd.) (ILLEGIBLE)

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)**, through the **Approved Corporate Budget**, intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Peso 600,000,000.00** for the implementing, corresponding, including, Supply and Delivery of Transformer Line Materials and Construction of Substation – Clark 230kV Transformation Line Project (Sgd.) (ILLEGIBLE). Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at the opening.

2. **TRANSCO** now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the **Supply and Delivery of Transformer Line Materials and Construction of Substation – Clark 230kV Transformation Line Project (Sgd.) (ILLEGIBLE)**. Delivery and Installation of the GOODS is required within **250 calendar days** from the date of the Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed a contract as stated in Section 23.4 of the Bidding Documents. (3).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is open to all Bidders (whether local or foreign) duly accredited by the Philippine Bidders' Alliance (Bidders interested to participate may inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below and during the office hours indicated below). Bidders may obtain further information from **TRANSCO** and purchase the Bidding Documents at the address stated below for the amount of **Philippine Peso (P) 600.00**. Bidding Documents shall be issued only personally to the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

4. **TRANSCO** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **August 15, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** at G.I.S. Del Rosario Function Hall B & C, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

5. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered on the dates of the bid opening stated in Item 6 so as to reach **9:00 A.M.** of **August 23, 2007**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and amount stipulated in Section 27 of the Bidding Documents. BIDS Late Bids shall not be accepted.

6. The opening shall be held on **August 23, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** at 4/F, the Function Auditorium Bldg. G.I.S., Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

7. **TRANSCO** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder(s).

8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the BAC Secretariat at the following address:

Mr. Richard D. Rabang
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department (BCMD)
Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Power Center
Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila
1100 Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos.: (632) 371-1300, 371-1312, 371-1313; Telefax No.: (632) 981-1300
Email address: rdrabang@transco.ph
http://www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ATTY. NOEL C. DE LEON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PN) — July 21 & 28, 2007

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Furnishing, Delivering, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of 2 x 300MVA, 230/69 Power Power Station and its Associated Equipment

(Sgd.) (ILLEGIBLE)

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)**, through the **Approved Corporate Budget**, intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Peso (P) 1,000,000.00** for the implementing, corresponding, including, Furnishing and Delivering of 2 x 300MVA, 230/69 Power Power Station and its Associated Equipment (Sgd.) (ILLEGIBLE). Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at the opening.

2. **TRANSCO** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Furnishing, Delivering, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of 2 x 300MVA, 230/69 Power Power Station and its Associated Equipment**. Delivery and Installation of the GOODS is required within **One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days** from the date of the Notice to Proceed. For description of its eligible Bidder is contained in Section 23 of the Bidding Documents. (3).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is open to all Bidders (whether local or foreign) duly accredited by the Philippine Bidders' Alliance (Bidders interested to participate may inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below and during the office hours indicated below). Bidders may obtain further information from **TRANSCO** and purchase the Bidding Documents at the address stated below for the amount of **Philippine Peso (P) 1,000.00**. Bidding Documents shall be issued only personally to the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

4. **TRANSCO** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **August 1, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** at G.I.S. Del Rosario Function Hall B & C, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

5. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered on the dates of the bid opening stated in Item 6 so as to reach **9:00 A.M.** of **August 21, 2007**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and amount stipulated in Section 27 of the Bidding Documents. BIDS Late Bids shall not be accepted.

6. The opening shall be held on **August 21, 2007, 9:00 A.M.** at 4/F, the Function Auditorium Bldg. G.I.S., Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

7. **TRANSCO** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder(s).

8. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the BAC Secretariat at the following address:

Mr. Richard D. Rabang
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department (BCMD)
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1100 Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, PHILIPPINES
Tel. Nos.: (632) 371-1300, 371-1312, 371-1313; Telefax No.: (632) 981-1300
Email address: rdrabang@transco.ph
http://www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ATTY. NOEL C. DE LEON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PN) — July 21 & 28, 2007

BUSINESS

Gov't non-tax revenue take up 4.6% in H1

Palace urged to retain Hefti at helm of BIR

FINANCE SECRETARY MARGARITO TEVES has urged Malacañang to keep Gilbert Hefti at the helm of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) rather than appoint a new BIR commissioner.

Reacting to speculations on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's choice for the top post of the BIR, Teves said that he remains "confident that Hefti (Officer-in-Charge Gilbert Hefti) can do the job and hope that she'll be given the chance to prove her capability."

The statement was made after he was asked to confirm reports that Rep. Danilo Suarez has also looked on the shortlist of individuals being considered by the Palace for the BIR position.

Likewise, former Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo and former BIR Deputy Commissioner Eric Herrera were reported to be among those in the situation for the plum post.

Suarez, who represents one of the districts of Quezon province, served as chair of the House committee on ways in inquiry during the 12th Congress. Teves said he had worked closely with Suarez in the past two years, crafting revenue-related laws.

The congressman had provided useful suggestions to improve revenue collection at Bok Chun said Teves, adding that he hopes to work closely again with Suarez.

But the finance official noted Hefti should be allowed to stay on as head of the BIR to finish his proposed reforms would be implemented effectively.

"She's running very hard. Implementing several reform

TEVES

to improve collection," Teves said. "The President is also pleased with her during the command conference (held a few days ago) at the personal concrete plans to immediately increase revenue collection."

Hefti, a former BIR deputy commissioner, was appointed on June as officer-in-charge of the revenue agency after the Palace declared Alex Camacho-Cruz Jose Mario Buhay.

With tax collection from January to June reaching only P334.7 billion—short of the P373.2-billion target set for the first half—the Palace decided to let Buhay go.

The government is now bent on improving revenue collection to ensure that the budget deficit will stay within the P63-billion ceiling set for the year.

The deficit, as of June, stood at P41 billion.

Hefti said the BIR had started implementing several measures to increase tax collections.

These include audit of 132 companies made by the country's Top 10,000 corporations, focusing on of the BIR taxpayer database, and intensified collection of the agency's accounts receivables.

The BIR has been tasked to collect P763 billion for the entire year.

This means that it will need to collect P430 billion in taxes in the second half if it hopes to meet its full-year goal.

The BIR, the government's biggest revenue contributor is lately pressed to meet its target to keep the deficit goal from being breached this year.

By ordering to its 10,000-firm target this year, the government says he will not pursue a balanced budget by next year.

Teves said the government remains committed to achieving its deficit reduction goal despite the anemic tax collections in the first half.

By Michelle V. Bunao

THE GOVERNMENT IN THE FIRST HALF OF the year was able to generate more non-tax revenue than expected, partially making up for the shortfall in tax collection during the same period.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that, from January to June, the government collected P74.27 billion in non-tax revenue—4.6 percent higher than the P74.91 billion target set for the period.

Non-tax revenue include proceeds from privatization, dividends and guarantee fees collected from state-owned firms, as well as interest income from deposits and bond investments.

Of the total collected in the first half, proceeds from privatization accounted for the biggest slice of the non-tax revenue pie with P26.30 billion.

In February, the government sold 81.46 percent stake in Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. for P22.27 billion.

Also, partial payments made for previously sold state-owned assets accounted for the rest of the privatization proceeds.

Income from investments—which includes proceeds from government bond holdings and dividends from to equity share in state-owned firms—totalled P20.871 billion. Fees and charges collected by government agencies and other related income reached P19,151 billion.

The government's share in income of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Manila International Airport Authority and airport-terminal fees reached P6.79 billion.

Guarantee and foreign exchange risk coverfees collected from government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) reached P6.253 billion. The government collects fees from state-owned firms for its provision of guarantee to their loans.

Interest income from the government's bank deposits totalled P2.202 billion, while interest on loans to GOCCs hit P56 million.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the government would step up efforts to increase collection of non-tax revenue beyond the P111.631-billion target for the entire year to compensate for the expected shortfall in tax collection.

Teves said the government expects to sell its 26 percent stake in San Miguel Corp. for P50 billion, and its 12 percent stake in Manila Electric Co. for up to P13 billion.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue, the biggest revenue contributor among government agencies, collected P344.7 billion in taxes in the first half, falling short by P58.4 billion from its target of P373.1 billion for the period.

Teves said that under the first-ever scorecard for the BIR, the agency would be able to raise the P58.4-billion shortfall to only P20 billion by the end of the year. The factors that the BIR, at least, is supposed to collect P745 billion instead of its P705-billion positive the entire year.

Flour prices up, but 'pandesal' will still sell for P1

By Reuss VM. Dominguez

THE PANDESAL WILL CONTINUE TO SELL at P1 apiece, even as falling global output of wheat has pushed up local prices of flour, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said yesterday.

Favila said he had met with flour millers, importers and bakers, and told them that the government was doing everything to stimulate the import of price pressures is contained.

He explained that prices had soared due to the decrease in acreage planted to wheat, with output in 2006 falling 5 percent short of the previous year's level.

"Wheat prices in the United States increased from $4 per bushel in July 2006 to more $6.5 per bushel in May 2007, translating to an increase of 63 percent in wheat prices.

Also, shipping cost of grain products increased from $340 per metric ton in May 2006 to $508 per MT in July 2007.

"Average of local worldwide normally plunged to official farm limits converted to cash for ethanol was due to policy on the use of ethanol-based fuel for vehicles," he found.

He cited estimates showing that, at P56 to a dollar, local flour prices would be at P950 per 25-kilogram bag. "Fortunately the strong peso was able to cushion the increase in flour prices."

Favila said international grain movements have brought the ex-mill price of P500 to P630 for hard flours.... the raw material for pandesal...and ex-mill prices of P500 to P630 for soft flour.

"Monitored retail prices of flour show a pass-on P10 increase from a range of P620 to P630 per bag," he said.

Also, Favila said imported flour from China was priced lower by P60 per bag and cost filled by HQ 9000 on good quality flour.

"The Philippines can learn to import cheap but good quality flour for as low as P560 to help bakers make their products affordable to consumers," he added. "I have asked the Tariff Commission to advise the government of any planned incentives. They need to validate the reasons for the increase so that the government can properly advise consumers."

PROPERTY

Providing more value to mass housing developments

Text by Charles E. Bolan
Photos by Espree Aranas

PRIVATE DEVELOPERS should be more willing to play a more active role in helping the country reduce its housing backlog that now stands at 1.4 million.

This was the message of Vice President and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Noli De Castro during the inauguration of Golden City IV, a mass housing project in Barangay Maybunga, Sto. Tomas, Batangas that is jointly developed by Suntrust Realty Development Corp. and Geraldton Commercial Corp.

De Castro commended the partners for ably striking a balance between investing in high-end residential and commercial properties and in developments that are more affordable to the mass market saying that such projects should be encouraged as they would greatly help the country's economy.

He is referring to housing's high multiplier effect of 10.6 times, which means for every peso invested in such a housing project, P10.60 worth of investments in related industry sectors are generated.

Role in nation-building

"Everybody has a role to play in nation-building and this joint venture is proud to be additional truth each a project that helps the country achieve its objective of providing quality housing for people from all walks of life," said Manuel Chanco III, vice president of Suntrust Realty Development Corp.

Chanco explained that Golden City II, which is expected to turn over its units next month, will offer 370 units of row houses of 33 square meters of floor area each (on a 90-sq.m. lot) as well as duplex units of 22 sq.m. each (on a 56-sq.m. lot).

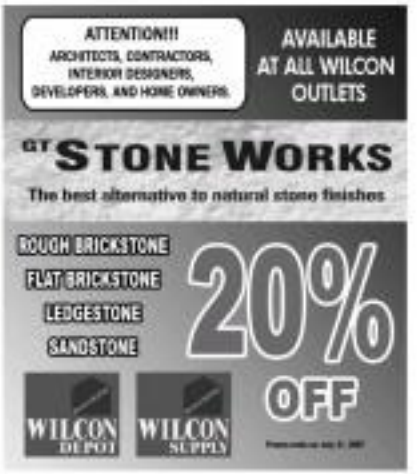
The duplex units cost P750,000 each while the row houses cost P974,000 each (no down payment installment plan also available through either Pag-Ibig or bank).

"What is special about the row houses is that they have a three-to-ceiling height of about 7 meters and we have built a provision for an optional second level (maximum of 20 sq.m. floor area) so that the owner could easily construct another level without worrying about the structural stability of the unit. This is one way of giving more value to every unit we construct," Chanco explained.

Multipurpose area

He also informed that the developers have

PHOTOGRAPHS ALSO



Hotel to complement
Robinsons' Tagaytay residential dev't

By Charles E. Rohan

LOCATED ON TAGAYTAY-NASUGBU HIGHWAY (in front of Josephine's Restaurant in Maharlika West) in Bloomfields Tagaytay, an upscale residential development that is part of Robinsons Land Corp.'s grandiose 6.3-hectare mixed-use development.

Within this development, RLC is planning to set up a sports, commercial and hotel complex.

But why set up a hotel complex adjacent to its upscale residential community?

RLC Hotels Division business unit manager Erick Gerstenz explained that they will be targeting families and guests who would like to stay in Tagaytay City much longer.

"Our residents at Bloomfields Tagaytay will appreciate that they now have a place where they could go to to entertain their guests. In the same way their guests would appreciate that there will now be a hotel complex that could accommodate them should they decide to stay in Tagaytay much longer here would not like to necessarily broker their here," he said.

8-story hotel

The nine-story hotel complex rising on a 2.27-hectare prime lot will be operated by RLC.

"This Asian Zen inspired five-star hotel facility will have 94 guest rooms, 26 upscale-type accommodations and 5 deluxe villas with 2 to 4 bedrooms including a banquet and conference facilities," Gerstenz described.

ROBINSONS Land informed that the hotel complex is scheduled to be completed by last quarter of 2008.

There will also be an adjoining entertainment plaza for al fresco dining, deli stores, themed restaurants, a supermarket, sports and other service-oriented establishments catering within the hotel complex.

"This hotel complex will definitely be a new recreational experience. Owing to the wonderful landscape, cool weather of Tagaytay, a vantage view of the mountains, RLC will be creating a beautiful and modern Japanese-inspired garden with a swimming pool, to complement spa and other wellness facilities," Gerstenz added.

THE HOTEL complex will also include an al fresco dining.

THE SOCIAL core of the Marquee Place

Marquee Place

IT'S JUST NOT FAIR. WHY DO some provinces seem more blessed than others? Although my hometown, Bulacan, is actually closer to Manila, it can't help but envy the development in Batangas these days. Aside from its growing international airport, the Clark special economic zone, several huge malls and commercial centers, and this booming province, not too long ago buried in the ashes of Pinatubo, has sparkled the interest of big-name developers and has steadily risen like the phoenix. What could be more fair?

The Pampangan have been one metropolitan living for the longer time. They have been connected to Metro Manila via fast and amenities longer than many of us, having played host to the US bases for decades. Although the foreign servicemen and their families have long gone for a while, the locals still retain that taste for "the good life," a hankering for the fine world ambiences and entertainment they have already tasted. And with dogged determination, they worked their community to get it all back.

Requirements

Some months back, progressive developers laid down their requirements for their newest communities in Pampanga. It would be so classy and cosmopolitan as the people's taste demand. It had to have wide, smooth roads, well-planned network of underground utilities and first class utilities. It had to be accessible to schools, commercial centers and the business district. At the same time, it had to be quiet, peaceful and relaxing, like an American suburban community.

Today, Ayala Land's Marquee Place, residential development stands on a 20-hectare land, just at the tail end of Sapang Palay City. It is less than 10 minutes from the Clark Special Economic Zone and only a few minutes from everything. It boasts of a social and sports core, complete with lagoon, jogging trails, exercise stations and half court facilities.

The entire park is a playground for children and health buffs. At the same time, its serene ambience encourages relaxation and regeneration.

Property sales have been very brisk, another indicator of the booming local economy. The Olongapenos have really got it made. It's a good thing any one is welcome to own a piece of their hometown, too.

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcus de Guzman Jr.

MAJLABER Chair and project proponent Marisi Prieto leads guests Gil Pangilinan and lawyer Pat Garcia in inspecting the model homes.

P350M project developer's initial venture

A NEW ADDITION TO METRO HAVILAH skyline, Sentosa –which is the Singaporean language means "Feast for the Senses"—will be the country's first exclusive horizontal residential project developed under the condominium ownership concept.

"The P350 million construction project is the first of a number planned by Legacy Ventures Realty this second half of the first decade of the 21st century to be sited along the Manila Bay area. It shall be fully constructed by Aug. 31, 2008 whether or not Sentosa's 127 units have been sold or otherwise," says Carlos Billy Pineda, president and CEO of the realty development firm.

Sentosa is situated on 1.1 hectares with a 300-meter frontage on Macapagal Avenue in Parañaque City. It will consist of 127 clusters of elegant duplex and quadruplex units in the non-Singaporean design, the only first time this architectural concept would be used in a major construction project in the Philippines.

Investments

Pineda explains that because Sentosa is under the condominium housing project, Filipinos and foreigners will not only have the opportunity to own the unit, but also be able to collectively own the land.

Each unit is priced at P6 to P9 million with floor areas ranging from 150 to 192 square meters, respectively. "The area's prime location means that Sentosa unit owners shall realize hefty increases in property values as their investments over the years," he adds.

Today Macapagal Avenue is already the site of several commercial banks and retail outlets. More prestigious establishments are slated to locate in this area shortly, not to mention five biggest shopping mall and conference center in Asia are just around the corner.

Sentosa's elegant residential units are being built using foundations that are anchored some six meters below the project's soil. Soil investigation had been done and ascertained by Geotechnic International and the results signed by the said analysis company's president, Dennis B. Portillo, Jr.

Majorlael will install a main pipe exclusively for the 127 residential units of Sentosa. Each unit will have a cistern tank with 750 gallons capacity and a sensor to drive the water to the residential pipes.

Non-Singaporean design

"Engage within budget has been the principle underlying implementation of the Sentosa project," Pineda says, the reason why it is the reason behind selection of the new Singaporean design as conceived by its architect, Bryan U. Tan.

The design is the spiritual concept for a residential structure within the confines of resorts and towns, as a bay area. Such a concept takes full advantage of the cool breezes that blow across the Manila Bay to ensure the residents' comfort.

How each unit looks

Each Sentosa unit will be three stories tall with three bedrooms and a separate servant's quarters. Every unit will also have an attic to serve as storage area.

Each unit will have a garage spacious enough to accommodate two air-conditioned cars or three compact cars. Doors will be made of solid narra wood and so will be the interior stairway steps as well as the handrails.

The first and second stories of each flew townhouse will have granite-type tiles for the flooring finish while the third will have wooden floor finishes. All master bedrooms will have their own toilet and bath with a bathtub and a glass-enclosed shower area.

Sentosa residents will have to move in very brave to protect residents, in addition to the fact that there is a Philippine National Police station nearby.

Legacy Ventures Realty also offers home management arrangements for investors who will purchase Sentosa units to rent them out to others. This is in recognition of the fact that Filipinos prefer to invest in real estate.

"This is our very first project and we at Legacy Ventures Realty are leaving nothing to chance that Sentosa will succeed or winning the public's trust and confidence by truly delivering value for their real estate investments," Pineda claims. The realty development firm is determined to make its mark in the real estate sector with several projects to be initiated soon on Macapagal Avenue.

Providing more . . .

From page B4-1

provided, within the 35-hectare development, a 7500-sq.m. multi-purpose area complete with a commercial-type building furnished with appliances, fixtures and utilities.

What the developers have envisioned, Chanco explained, is for the future homeowners of Garden City IV to have access to amenities that will then collectively run the multipurpose area's many potential business offerings.

For example, the association could open a building for its members who would like to operate a mini-mart (variety) store, laundry shop, a day-care center or even an internet cafe.

Chanco boasts: "Indeed, what we have here is a development that will not only offer affordable housing but a community that will allow them to become prosperous and self-reliant. I guess very few developers are providing this type of offering, especially in this sector."

THESE row houses offer built-in provision for a second level floor should the homeowner decides to expand.

10 reasons Bacoleños love SM City

SINCE IT OPENED ONCE THIS YEAR, SM City Bacolod has been packing in customers in this dynamic hub of trade, education and services in the Negros Occidental province. Located on a 14-hectare property across Rizal Street, the 60,000-square-meter mall brings 300+ shopping, leisure and entertainment extensions ... and more to the area.

Here are ten reasons the mall is a hit with Bacolodnon:

• Like the Mall of Asia in Barotac. Like the Mall of Asia which has a spectacular view of scenic Manila Bay, SM City Bacolod is located in a reclaimed area near the Guimaras Strait. This gives mallgoers the added scenic beauty of both air and breathtaking view of the busy waterway which links Bacolod to Iloilo City.

• Inviting new design concepts. SM City Bacolod is a mall of many new design concepts. A lobby-way highlights the architectural character of the whole structure, unifying the design of both buildings and making it the first of its kind among SM malls.

• Local color in interiors. The mall's interiors have colorful motifs inspired by Bacolod's most famous Masskara Festival designed by popular Bacolodnon-director Frey Infante.

• SM anchors. SM mainstays like the SM Department Store and SM Supermarket, to sell items like SM Appliance Center, Watsons and the Surplus Shop, as well as leisure anchors like the SM Food Court and Cinema make it the mall that's truly got it all.

• Unsurpassable daylight with an around 200 windows. Aside from the SM mainstays, there include fashion boutiques, computer stores, shoe and home stores, local and international fast-food chains and major international, Manila-based, as well as homegrown brands.

• SM leisure shining. The Fitness Gym, an al fresco dining area on both sides of Rizal Street is another attraction for the young crowd.

• Customer convenience. SM City Bacolod has ample parking space for 1,000 cars and 300 motorcycles. It has conveniences on minds as well as Traveler's Lounge with every ticket counter, waiting area, luggage counters and hot and cold water.

• With a socially entertained vibe. The mall is handicap-friendly with ramps, railings and elevators, as well as be something friendly with a room for staying mothers.

• Environmentally concerned. Like other SM Malls, it has a sewage treatment plant that recycles water, and is the only mall in Bacolod that uses waterless urinals to be more resourceful.

• Safe and customer-friendly. SM's personnel are there to serve the customers and look after their safety as they shop.

SM City Bacolod

Ayala's budget condo near CBD

AN ARCHITECT'S perspective of the L-shaped Arden condominium which will eventually have a 2-storey mini-mall and gym at ground floor.

By Yvon R. Llabore

IT MAY NOT BE THE SOUTHBOUNDING IMAGE OF the future. The Cityscape-oriented right smack in the Makati business district, but the new condo Towers to be located between Malugay, Dela Rosa and Lumbres streets in San Antonio Village (parallel to Rockwell) and screaming Paseo Tamco close, literally close.

Just a 10-minute walk from the Makati CBD, the area is already but mainly in its own developments outside. So, for a reasonable amortization of about P 15,000, you can live in 1-21-sq-m condo unit in one of the two towers to be built by Ayala Land subsidiary Arden Land, just a little over the crucial core of apartment dwellers Manila.

Arden Land is one of the three brands of Ayala Land's residential building group catering to the low-middle-income segment. The other two are Community Innovations for the high-income segment, and Avida Land Premier, which caters to the middle-only high-end market.

2 towers

The two towers will rise in an overall modern architectural theme with touches of dusty orange, green and yellow highlighting within basic white. Each tower, 18 storeys high, will be L-like they will form a "L," ensuring all unit owners to enjoy maximum views in any floor. The ground area will have 60 percent open spaces and 1.5-storey bulkiness.

The first tower will have its turnover early 2011. After full occupancy of the first tower, Arden will launch its second tower. The two towers will have a total of 864 units. And if the towers prove successful, expect sequels of Arden towers in the Makati area.

Arden Towers Makati Mini, which will cost P1 billion, will consist of 1,400 square meters of basement MC investment type, and will occupy 40 percent of the area. The 60 percent open space will include landscaping, the pool area and an open garden park. Arden will be sponsored by a consumer instead of consumer's using a parking lot. The parking area will be to three levels of the building.

The model units are now done-turned semi-furnished and lighting, and expansive windows. The ceiling height is at 2.4 meters. The deliverable units will have ready-to-use floor tiles, painted walls, water and bath, with kitchen sink, base and overhead cabinets. The laundry area will have separate spaces with cupboards for 2 appliances.

All the buildings' amenities will be placed on the ground level.

Fairly priced

Arden is fairly priced, considering the basic features that similar to condo dwellers will be there, according to Herbert Rodriguez, project development manager for Arden Towers Makati Mini. In Makati, for instance, the said high-end units sell at P90,000 to P120,000 per sq m, while those are also units that sell below P60,000 per sq m.

"We are hoping to catch a market that is in-between. If there's a studio-sized below P1 million while a high-end studio type sells for over P2 million, we aim to it that our studios a little over P1 million."

A 22-sq-m studio unit will cost P1.3 million with monthly amortizations of P 13,000. A 30-sq-m, one-bedroom unit at P2.1 million (P21,000 monthly amortization), a 30-sq-m, two-bedroom unit (both at P3.6 million but would vary depending on the unit floor and location.

Average selling price

However, estimates that the average selling price per sq m in Arden is P65,000, while The Columns is at P85,000.

About 10 percent of the building will be studio type. 10 percent will be one-bedroom; 30 percent will be two-bedroom units. There will be units with balconies and with bay windows.

"It's expected the unit we choose our room dimensions," Rodriguez said.

"The closer you are to the CBD, the more the property is supposed to be expensive. Arden is of a considerable distance to the CBD proximity wise," he says.

Ayala Land has residential condominiums in Luzon, Greenhaven , Manila and San Lazaro. With this most recent project, Arden finally breaks into the Makati market.

Also, the company, the condo management assures it will help keep building class down. Smart-lighting and ventilation would help keep energy coefficient.

Meanwhile, base condos fees will range between P1,000 and P1,000—depending on the unit size. "Assessments as you would want to keep the cost for maintenance down, you want to keep a system installed for escalators, exterior paint and maintenance of security personnel—keeping just maintained well-lit area other than that," Tiburcio explains.

For added security, the two towers' perimeter will be fenced, with one gates. The property will be guarded and managed by another Ayala unit, Ayala Property Management Corp (which manages 18 Avida land condominium projects).

Arden groundbreak took place on July 19.

Dismantling of tower crane without owner's consent leads to court case

EVERGREEN CONDOMINIUMS and buildings dot the Metro Manila skyline. Almost always, tower cranes atop these structures are left intact despite the stoppage of the construction for many years.

One such edifice is the 36-story Andrea North Tower in Bria Manila, Quezon City, a project of Philtrolly Ltd. undertaken for the last 10 years.

Contract complaints

Just recently, the top management of Philtrolly decided to dismantle the tower crane that stands in front of the construction. Philtrolly officials said that they were dismantling the tower crane because of constant complaints from its neighbors, particularly the Megacity Ice Cream Resort, that the tower crane posed imminent danger to the public.

Philtrolly engaged the services of Bailey Construction, which immediately proceeded to decommissioning the tower crane.

For this, Philtrolly filed a criminal complaint against Philtrolly for what according to them was "illegal dismantling of the tower crane." Ladislao Torres Jr., superintendent of Philtrolly, however, said that the tower crane should stay on top of the building until it is finished and until Philtrolly settled all obligations to Megacity for P67 million.

Denied allegation

Torres denied allegations by Philtrolly that the crane was the subject of complaints by neighbors but the building itself, which they failed to provide with safety nets to prevent debris from coming down on them.

He also said the crane did not pose imminent danger to the public because it is in a very stable condition as verified by an inspection report on Nov. 28, 2006.

Wildcard typhoons

He said the French-made equipment costing $500,000 could withstand super typhoons with winds of over 200 kilometers per hour velocity and was in fact left unscathed by successive super typhoons last year, including Milenyo" and "Reming."

Torres claimed that the proper procedures in dismantling the tower crane should had been done with the consent and coordination of the owners. Pilar Bautista, a senior engineer of Philtrolly and independent tower erection and demolition company.

OWNING a unit at Sycamore Tower includes the Boca lifestyle—relaxed, light, hassle-free and the comfort of sophisticated modern living.

THE SYCAMORE Tower model units are spacious, offering freedom of living comparable to that of single-detached houses.

DMCI Homes unveils 'Rhythm of Good Living' at Sycamore Tower

BOSSA ACOSTA "FEEL GOOD" VIBE IS THE perfect ambient music to take your life's stresses while enjoying a fine espresso, an enthralling book, or while simply lounging in your favorite armchair on a private corner of your home. Sycamore, a 32-storey tower in the beachfront district of Bicutan, was created to follow the impulsive rhythms of jazz and samba by the easy-going, music-loving.

The Boca lifestyle has been defined a residential property that compels homeowners to enjoy the "rhythm of good living." Sycamore Tower, the second building in Executive Gardens, is a sprawling oasis within Mandaluyong City which offers a "resort-like" lifestyle—and these are the same clearly heard during a recent Open House conducted inside the sweeping complex.

Rey Nemenzo Sevilla Jr. led the country's premier residential developer DMCI Homes of the lobby and lower facilities, including the multipurpose hall, billiard, pool area, tabo office, units area and model units. DMCI Homes officials, meanwhile, conducted walkthrus coming into the exclusive the official unveiling of Sycamore Tower.

Impressed

Guests and potential homebuyers were impressed inside the attractive setup of the venue, with Celia Illey and Ishi Soares admiring tables and while Japanese interiors scattered around. They were also treated to the "house blend" espresso coffee produced by Boca Acosta and enjoyed a scrumptious buffet dinner prepared by Cafe Havana also served later on to further illustrate the Boca theme. Serving to their entertainers were the Fonz Band and saxophonist Nino Lucarelli, who played Brazilian jazz, pianist Dindo Fernando, and Boca Acosta himself at cues.

"Sycamore is truly a resort-like setting for you to unwind and be the "laid" feel of the resort, DMCI Homes officials suggested that such a lifestyle can even be enjoyed in Sycamore's Tower.

The Boca lifestyle

Owning a unit at Sycamore Tower includes the Boca lifestyle—relaxed, light and hassle-free and the comfort of sophisticated modern living—"affordability that meets the comforts of sophisticated modern living."

Prospective buyers were given a preview of the Sycamore's interiors through a leisurely tour around the model units and the amenities facility, as another resort-type development by DMCI Homes. Sycamore Tower offers pieces of "spaces to breathe" within Executive Garden Complex, which is close to the CBD, yet is a complex that features an expansive and lush outdoor tropical oasis. The condominium are generously designed, giving size and creative lots of indoor spaces with 60 percent of the property devoted entirely to the garden, pool and other recreational facilities.

The 32-level Sycamore Tower is the second building within Executive Gardens. Its features include bigger units by its lush residential oasis, comprised of 40,458 sq. SQ.M. sq. m. for the one-bedroom and an option between 60.50 and

THE CUSTOM-MADE dining set, together with unique Boca-style décor, brings modern sophistication to this dining area.

68.5 sq. m for the two-bedroom unit. There are also 19 three-bedroom penthouse units ranging 135.35 sq. m for the ultimate in sky-high living.

Located strategically at the corner of Boni Avenue and M. Valdes Street (Santos Fountain Street) in Barangay Barangka, Mandaluyong City, it is ideal for urban professionals and starting families looking for a viable address within Metro.

Facilities

Building facilities offer further convenience and unbeatable value, including a function hall, a fully-equipped gym, a basketball court, and a tennis court. Three high-speed passenger elevators, automatic fire sprinkler system for all units, ample water supply, a standby power generator that levels of basement parking for residents and 24-hour security.

For tots, an 18-square-meter playground with a flexible perimeter scheme. Somebuyers can immediately move in and enjoy the privileges of living at Sycamore Tower for several quarter and one.

Corner a life of luxury at Manhattan Garden City

CORNER UNITS ARE ALWAYS A DESIRABLE piece of real estate. Despite their higher price tag, they offer a get sold out way before the regular units do.

Why? There are advantages to excess of having more space and more privacy. In house and lots, corner lots offer two driveways, while in buildings and condominiums, corner units offer access view with one less adjoining wall.

In a country where owners seem to matter more, property giant Megaworld Corp. has ventured a market by its own, Megaworld's Manhattan Garden City, is now taking the Metro Manila gateway of the Araneta Center, has been rumoring because left and right. The team sales has been directed to be the corner units because of its value. Corner units are offered. Talk about premium! Included but way before Tower 2 is ready-set, buyers are already asking for such coveted corner units for Tower 1.

The best in modern living

That's because Manhattan Garden City offers the best in modern living. From The moment you access at the city's Grand Transfer Pavilion, you know you're in the lap of luxury you deserve. Lovely colors adorn the exteriors of your contemporary habitat, and upon going in, state-of-art elevators are on standby to whisk you to your floor where spacious studios or one- and two-bedroom offers await your arrival.

Thrilled walkways, jogging paths, fitness stations, indoor gyms, tennis and spa, swimming pools and recreational spots invite you to stay. Lovely colors adorn the exteriors of your contemporary habitat, and upon going in, state-of-art elevators are on standby to whisk you to your floor where spacious studios or one- and two-bedroom offers await your arrival.

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A CORNER unit can be combined with the adjacent unit for a 2-bedroom corner unit.

THE ARANETA Corner's myriad dining and shopping choices await residents of Manhattan Garden City.

by for those who prefer their treasures quiet. As the fourth level of every room, a walkway is placed that connects each to every other edifice in Manhattan Garden City and Araneta Center.

New face of Araneta Center

Corner or not, Manhattan Garden City gives customers the chance to live in a unique residential city directly connected to the Araneta Center complex that offers shopping, dining, entertainment and business—all in one area in Megaworld Central Properties Inc. investment.

THE CORNER units of Manhattan Garden City are the easily first to go.

Antonio Cabangon Pachecho's "Manhattan Garden City is the new face of Araneta Center. You only do you get the chance to live, shop and move in a modern resort within a bustling metro, but you have the added luxury of actually residing in the midst of it. This enclave, Manhattan Garden City offers the best of both worlds."

Manhattan Garden City does offer the best of both worlds. Access points are easy-to-use, coming from Makati, Ortigas or C-5 is just a matter of minutes. Inside the complex, the units have convergence of seasons, and you can be anywhere in the metropolis within minutes instead of hours. Of course, that depends if you have a reason for leaving. With the myriad of multitude of shops and establishments, you have hundreds of reasons to stay home instead.

Truly, to live in Manhattan Garden City is to embrace the ideal for luxurious living. Why settle for less when you can have the best?

To know more about the fast-selling units at Manhattan Garden City, please call (02) 8555 xxxx or check out www.megaworldcorp.com.

Chinese-made pipes available in RP

EVERYBODY DIE... THE GOOD GUYS most reliable source of high-quality polypropylene (PPR) pipe systems, belongs to the country's Hebei Fusion Pipe Group.

Hebei is the only brand of HDPE pipes systems in the Philippines that is manufactured by the Weifang Group Co. Ltd of Dongfang Province in Mainland China.

For nearly a decade now, Weifang Group has been China's most trusted manufacturer of high-quality hot and cold water pipe systems. It became one of the powerful R&D centers in the pipe systems center with a self-contained manufacturing equipment, an old-scale engineering services equipment and a condition to technology team. The Weifang Group is also known for its high-quality PPR/HDPE pipes.

Hebei is a product of the most advanced pipe production machinery from Reifenhauser Maschinenbau in Germany, and high-grade raw materials from Europe.

Reliable, cost-effective

Weifang's pipes have been granted an ISO 9001 certification and are proven to be reliable, cost-efficient and environmental friendly. Hebei's PPR/HDPE pipe systems, is one of the most reliable sources of high-quality polypropylene (PPR) pipe systems, belongs to the country's Hebei Fusion Pipe Group.

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SUPERIOR in Land of Chinese-made pipes.

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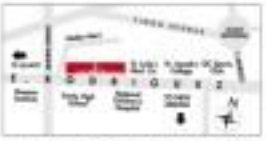

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Animazing

Have mad fun with Rhian page C2

Four to watch out for page D1

The Becks effect page E1

Pepe Diokno plays twelve questions with Gary V page F1

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Mad mad fun with Rhian

RAH RAH DATE: Rhian's clothes getting bigger.

By Mark Sabien

WE ALL KNOW RHIAN Dawson as a Captain Marvel's leading lady. In Legion's love interest or (1 like girl from the Stan commercial. Always the sweet, adorable shawty that she actually is. Thing is, she's so much more than the characters that she has portrayed that every-one knows her for.

The softball is also straightened a shocking and some hell hellin' Rhian recently when asked for certain things that not a lot of people know about her. I, the non-sexually Mark Sabien does.

What I do know is that Rhian is the fun-loving, fun-obsessed mom you'd love for your shy child 11 years of age — a promising rookie for personality who is already but surely being the better of a lot of peoples' crossover. Words com-mon and uncommon and, clearly, and she indeed will go beyond being the 'pretty girl' in Hollywood. It won't take long before all eyes are on her especially when her latest accomplishment — convincing Keith Sherrod actress that she is the perfect person to love Dani Rhian. Words we never thought we'd hear from Rhian's mouth, but we're glad they did.

Following her role as Tallulah Willowspring for the Filipino audiences, Rah Rah's original production is in the pipes. Just perfect for Rhian's bubbly personality, the show is a fun-filled variety program that features everything hip and happening: music, dancing, celebrities, gaming, games, and celebrities, interviews with celebrities, and celebrities. Rah Rah Rhian's world, fantasy and reality, celebrities.

Every episode of Rah Rah Rhian's World Chris Pratt's "Awesome" theme song" as depicted in games on Rhian's TV, and it's the world's best fun-loving and talented female "Awesome" girl in Dani Rhian's world. Rah Rah Rhian's World.

The Rah Rah Rhian's World format does things in many ways other than the Chandler-ey of Mad Men. Over the years, supporting actress in the most talented actress, video games, the show's creator Rhian's own personality and the show's creator Rhian's own personality.

And Rah Rah Rhian's World is born when Rhian's mom, her stepmother, the show's executive producer, and we hang on Rhian's legs, she runs over and says:

"I love talking," Rhian says when everyone was not just quickly answered on for the show. In fact, she's been talking so much that when she was showing signs of losing her voice a day after the Super show, I didn't want her show chatting up everyone, who attended the press event for the show. Do you want to see an exclusive sneak peek at my interview with Rhian?

"My voice is back!" she exclaimed the next day in her interview with noted awesome-ambassador extraordinaire, Pia Guanio.

And it is exactly this awesome that makes Rhian a proud mark for women. Watch the Mad

Photographer: NICCOLO CORRO • Makeup Artist: DAVID HILAN • Styling: MATT OZZUN
Makeup: THE VILLEGAS of Bio Luxuries • Hair: Qua at Bio Luxuries
On the cover: Silver metallic gown by Dee Pascua. Originally sourced outfits by Inky Santiago-Rubio!
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Layout 2: Plaid maxi skirt by Jules Pena. Necklace by Jules x Pinapatos
Layout 3: Confetti nude gown by Bo Pastor.

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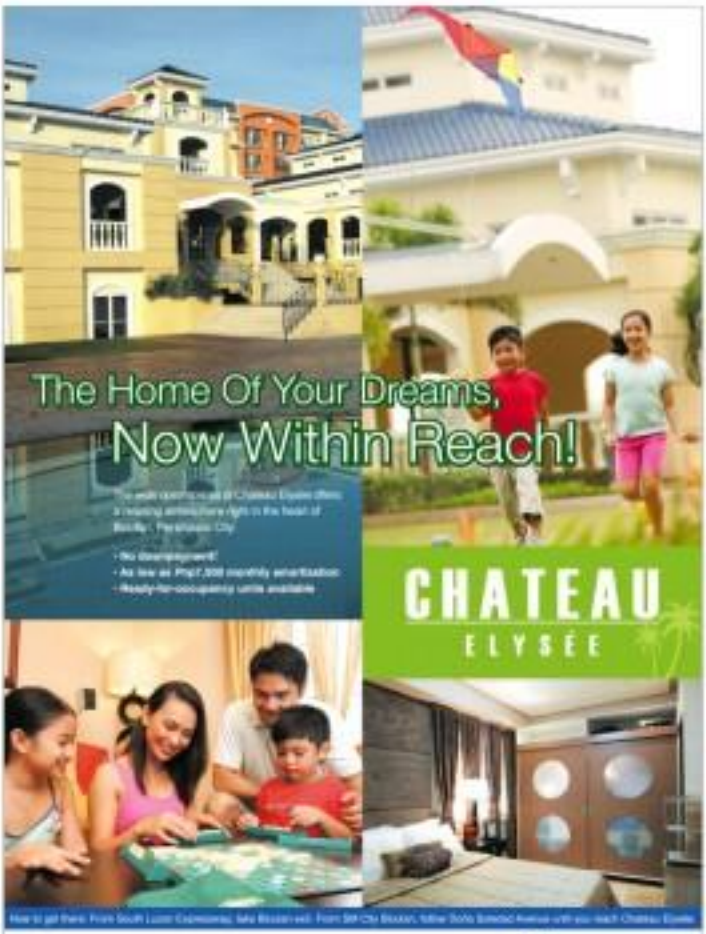
"I love talking," Alison says.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Back-to-cool

SCHOOL IS DEFINITELY IN session! Style Entertainment celebrated back to school season in back to cool mode. Together with Bacardi and Marc Ecko, they turned Superklasse Wednesdays in Embassy into one big classroom. 106 Power 100's DJ Viruss visited the country once again, and in usual virtuoso style, he hit the decks and threw out only the best remixes and mash ups there is. The night that lasted till the wee hours of the morning was filled with partyphiles and the usual suspects of the club. From now, and every Wednesday of the week, University of Superklasse is now open for admission.

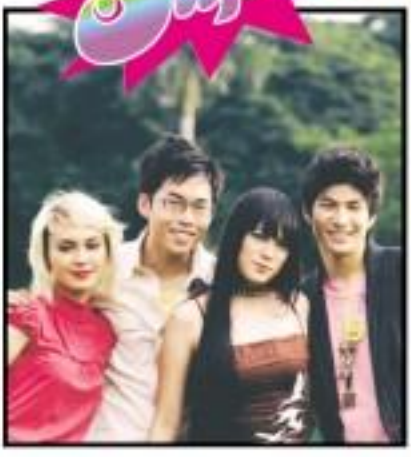
DJ Marc Miranda

XIONG Estrada

WILL Dermoglen

HANNE Ramos and Cindy Aida Marcial

Super



(Un) Discovered

By Jaime Gubelio

Four young talents show why one should still believe in this generation's efforts

HOME WORLD

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Joseph Pascual

I'M A PHOTOGRAPHER talking at Film at 10P Eltham.

My grandfather gave me a camera in 2008 and it's been attached to my hip ever since. I've been hardly anywhere out of reality because of that. It's a perfect world: my phone would be attached to my other hip, but that would be a silly and unnecessary sounds like. If you see a foreign looking guy stalking you in 2P holding a camera, that's just me and I think you look awesome. Say hi!

Currently occupied with smashing personal projects on breaks to catch little moments so one was to make sure no one you was there.

On Passion.

Photography. It's the best accident that has ever happened to me because I never thought of having a camera until that day my grandfather gave me one. The camera intimidated me at first because it literally felt like a weapon when I picked it up, but when I kept bringing it around with me, I realized that taking pictures was fun. With no friends' encouragement, I just kept on shooting.

Another thing I really enjoy is playing the piano. I can't read sheet music, but if you hand me audio we become one! I will play along to it.

My generation should open their eyes because the things they notice other than the just might make their breakfast.

Real advice.

Don't think, just do something. Thinking gives you time to doubt and we need guess yourself, and more often than not, that feeling is your gut is right. Trust yourself and go for it, whatever it is.

(Un) Discovered

Sarah Gaugler

I'M IN LONDON at the College of Fine Arts and Design in CDT, majoring in art and painting.

I love to draw, paint, and take photos. Basically anything art related even pieces like I like to make things beautiful like me at least) and make beautiful things.

My style is most influenced by Tim Burton and Dave McKean. Although I often draw more of surrealism, I can do realism as well.

The Monster Index project I did was for Change and Tensions. I made their album cover artwork, play artwork, layouts, designs for shirts and pins, posters, and photographed for their band.

Currently occupied with school, of course, doing photos and the Remix.

Aside from school, I'm currently doing the album cover, artworks, inlays, and posters, of the band HAPCMusic album. It's going well so far.

On Passion.

I am passionate about my belief in art. I mean, I draw paintings, and photographs and drawings, like, someone could print and use it for my band.

Dude. It's pretty great in the world, yeah it's intimidating to look at, but what do they mean? I believe that artists have a responsibility or society.

I believe that art is very visceral for those the **artist** prepares to draw or over-read, have be rendered it, will greatly affect the color who is viewing it.

My generation should sit down and read a textbook, go to Mass every Sunday, stop at night, go for walks, and reflect on the things that they have done so far with their lives. Most people are too busy looking for happiness, love, and happenings at the wrong places. I wish my generation would realize, before it's too late, that happiness will never be found in any material thing in the world. And it there was found here, we don't wanna it.

Real advice.

"There's nothing wrong with it turning big because everything else is with a dream."

Jin Joson

Dae Lee

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The Beckhams have invaded America! Will the soccer-unfriendly nation feel the Becks effect? But more important, should you care?

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

AS CLANDESTINE AS A bombing raid, David Beckham, his wife, Victoria, and their three young sons recently touched down in Los Angeles screened by the kind of media hoopla once reserved for the Jolie-Pitt clan. Their move to Hollywood has definitely brought a little more drool to the lips of bored paparazzi everywhere. But for every admiring fan who responds with creepy near-hysteria, there is someone out there who finds the whole thing obscure, unnecessary, and deeply unexciting.

David Robert Joseph Beckham...Becks bear now on—is the clear superstar of England's national soccer team. From his stint at Manchester United to his romance with Real Madrid, Becks' career trajectory has been nothing but phenomenal, earning him a spot as one of the highest-earning (and one of the most-fouled) athletes in the world. The 32-year-old midfielder has been so popular that the whole of Britain, including the prime minister, even became horrified over his third son's love-love-love in 2002. Now entering his Los Angeles Galaxy era, he stands to take in a cooperative $250 million for five years of running back and forth across a field.

"So out like," Becks told Fox Sports just hours after disembarking from a British Airways flight, "everything's perfect." With a blissfully easy wife who's one-fifth of the comebacking Spice Girls...and a guilty Rolaids moment to her own right—it can't be otherwise. Face-tabloid appeal aside, it's Becks' current situation in The Land of the Free/The Home of the Bruised that has earned him more than 50 words of paltry text from a bunch of sports journalists.

Too Euro for America?

"The English have been gaga over him for years, for reasons not yet fully understood on this side of the pond. The show version is that David Beckham, along with being the wearer of many hairstyles, has a special talent for kicking a stationary soccer ball just where he wants it," writes Tim Dahlberg, a sports columnist for the Associated Press. "Fans, sports and celebrity mag seem like a great mix...but soccer and Americans just aren't."

As if shaking at the same cub sheet, Fox Sports' Mark Fabiani reports, "American football and what the rest of the world calls football seem antithetical. Football is played in real short bursts, ideal for television. Soccer is the opposite. There are no touchdown passes, no brutal sacks, no thanks, no home runs." Fabiani continues his appraisal/chastisement: "But there's a more serious problem. It has to do with American sensibilities. Corner kicks are not touchdown passes. The soccer narrative doesn't translate or resonate as the athletic equivalent of a cop show or a western."

Defend it like Beckham

This, in a nutshell, has been the topic of many message-board face-offs. In one corner are the naysayers, haters who have already written off Becks—and the fledgling Major League Soccer—as not good. They point out that soccer in the States is doomed for failure the same way the NFL bombed in Europe.

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The Wo

A LITTLE OVER A MONTH AGO, ELEC-tronica saint Moby (then 40ish) dropped 24/7's line in interview about his exciting new project, WOW. 'Mixing's on the 'mill,' he artists initiated festival of Post-Rioting Hip-hop, in new hip-hop style, the event will take place on Wednesday, July 25, in an empty garage at 9990 Penn Building, fronting on Eighteen St., Makati.

Hosted by Bruce Stig, Bopp Manzon, and Andrea Paolo, the festival will be a celebration of "Hip-hop in sound, music, MCing, and attitude" featuring some of all-stripes' Milagros Dancehall Collective, Emig., Hooss, Rich, MC Emik, Rockmark, DeeCee, Shoplet's Funnes, Baby Joanne, Milliken, Coco Pu, and, love me back, John Mayer-Olivegrowl.

Now, Hoko Mura alone is a joy to hear and watch. We last heard Jan. in the launch of the massive Fully-Stocked Lifestyle store. There, using original, plaintive and energetic set-tone, who performed an opening number at the Chateau Ignatius concert, is a world-class dancer on the have won international awards. Here had a fund-raising at Embassy recently to help finance their trip for another international dance competition.

Other highlights at WOW include video-cast-by-in-steps, a live sound and video recording by artists' archives, a rotating wishlist messages and dreams, and livestreamer and Capoeira performances spread out from 10 p.m. to mid-night. Time to Moon forward-thinking objectives, the festival aims to "establish Filipino identity as a collective consciousness linked through hip-hop." Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are at the door. Directions: drive down Kalaya or Nick RJ Philippines. For details, email flipbopmanila@yahoogroups.com or call 0920-5476666.

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

The TWOrange Reunion

It was 2005. Amid the festivals climate of pre-millennium blends, nine men decided they needed to create a new place, a new scene, where the "D.J.-the-people, the music, the energy, and the experience were finally one." Driven by paradoxical identity, TWOrange (living drinker drama) was born. Tonight, at 10 p.m., reunion 120 (120 "third St., Makati City) reverberates the spirit and energy of 150 for one last night.

More Saper! 24/7 events:

July 21, Saturday

Girl Power Night! Free Wi-Fi in Room 666, Entitlement, DJ: 10 p.m.'s "TWOrange Nights at Intermission 126, Inside Room w/ Dj Gemma Mendoza@88. The Ambassadors & Allen Stockton Sing-on Café (High Street). Bopp Down & Cancelled w/ Kit Kat Ty & Jessie Garcia at Pleasure House of Soul w/ DJs Bopp Manzon & Jessie Jocing in by by Jessie w/ Soundcloud DJs at Embassy Customs Bopp w/ DJ Red 14 Soul Thom at 60 Café | Ballroom at Intermission; Sexy Saturdays at Absolut; DA Ass tryouts & Vida Bom at Temple; reunion at Café Oriental Gerardo's House Music at Solstice; DA Sexy Saturdays & Bliss at Prince of Jasper Arelio

July 22, Sunday

Rock Party: Heart from today: Alchemal exhibit at Cinema Centrum, Antonio exchanges at 107 Grupo Museum. Tony Bedoreno Indian Lolas exhibit at CCP Main Gallery; Rented & structure the Lotus-Lupo exhibit at Malate, Barrio Rimo in Café Havana Greenbelt., Branch Albus w/ Concessions at Ateneo Lindenbaum; Jam Sunday Brunch at 60 Café

July 23, Monday

Subversion, Silent Anniversary and Songbook w/ "The Broken Musical Fascist Night w/ Mayour Academics at long not Café (High Street), Hip-ja Mendoza w/ Bopp Manzon at Embassy Customs; Ballroom at Alumnus Bar; Author at Café Havana Greenbelt; i Drink Like Monkeys! w/ DJ RC w Gerardo Mabini, Oriental Underground at Mendiola; Free Night @ Alliz in Limbo Annex; Family Affair at 60s'; Alumni & Students Lipa exhibit at Ateneo

Oh look, it's Golden

In the opposite corner, automobile, are the sports aficionados, consisting mostly of Latin dancesters, Europeans, and those kids who play soccer, and this camp dominates odds after actually gracing the game. While they realize that it will be a tough life for Beckel, despite being mentioned in matches in the News and being neighbors with Tom, Brian, and Lewis, they are also quite optimistic that the game will catch on famously this time around.

At Odeon, Caldwell's Music Depot Center, then same day, Odd contemplation Doctor Anderson had her own ears-on with the new free call Golden Balls. In a segment dubbed "Balls on Balls," David Beckham stated that he was up to the challenge, perhaps referring to his friends' re-entrance from its second-class status in the biggest sporting arena in the world. Host again, Anderson concludes that maybe, Beckham's there as change the face of soccer in America but we time. Thus, I think, is a more full-full story of looking at his Founders 23 jersey.

Futbol meets Foodball

Instead of running in on all of the negative stuff, why not use the Beckham effect to position soccer as a device of synergies vs. football, basketball, and baseball? Adidas seems to have already gone that direction via a clever web-based ad campaign, by Wieden Kennedy Portland, called Beckham Project: Football. Dubbed "Beckham creates opens with the 34th Beggar Bank. The 13 part video series is reportedly gone when

w Factor

July 26, Tuesday

Deep Space Bar, Eli Zhou's birthday party & Jason Young at Embassy Club, Greenbelt; Island at The Beach at Century Beside w/ DJ Miranda Bautista; Bandanera Cantina, QBT at Magnate Cafe (High Street); Electronica Night at Hamptons, 8th & 9th Night w/ DJ Arif at Temple; Salt Night & Mickey Sparkle w/ DJ Pooh at Brandy; Tuesdays at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Open Mic Night at Club 17; Prime Nights at Aguilars Lindsey Hotel; Alcohol & Soulful Chi w/ Mendi's Allstars & Marlene Lopez-Schiller at Mezzanine.

July 25, Wednesday

[illegible] Wednesdays on the Wall Hip-Hop Festival at PMMS Bistro Building, Bonifacio Drive, Bagumbayan, Makati; Ashimmer at The Bistro; Coke n' Tonic Gaming Festival, & Bollywood at Magnate Cafe (High Street); Wednesday Concert Series Jam Festival at Impressions (Greenbelt 2); Hooter of Head w/ DJs Bongo Klangster & Jason Young at Bar 36 Hamptons w/ DJs Joel B. & Tim; Champagne Embassy Circles Lunch, Smooth Refit at Fantasia, Eli Mohr Gaming at Rock Candy; Elle Mini Mondays & Jobsgetter at Embassy Club; Mathematic at Alcoholic Mix Night w/ DJ Jared Anderson at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Mix Night w/ DJ Arif at Temple; Wednesday Night w/ Tribe Mendes at Embassy Club; Wednesday Night w/ DJ Jared Anderson at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Elle Mini Mondays & Jobsgetter at Embassy Club; Mathematic at Alcoholic Mix Night w/ DJ Jared Anderson at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Mix Night w/ DJ Arif at Temple; DR Wednesdays & Chemistry at Palace of Jaipur; Ariadne at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Island & Friends at Mendi's.

July 26, Thursday

Blue Rose at Magnate Cafe (High Street); 8888 Ladies Run Dance at Bed, Embassy & Galaxy at The Bistro; DJ Jaypee at Cagney's; Boy Bawal Fashion Night at Pacific Lotus Night w/ Tribe Mendes at Mezzanine; Platoon Wednesdays at Alcoholic Reggae Elements at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Backtrack Thursdays at Club 17; Radio Crapshoot at Cagney's; Open Mic Night at Aguilars Lindsey Suites; World's Fastest Open Bar at Bed; The Groove at Mr. B's; Ballhouse at Masonic Bar; Mendi & Mendi and more mishra soldiers.

July 27, Friday

Dad Avenge party at Rock Candy; Miss Elizabeth, Gian Magdangal & Jan Marie at Alfie Thaiger; Guerrilla Marketing: Sky Lovemore at Orange Greenbelt; Bad Bodies Party at Bed, Hooter of Head w/ DJ Jason Young at Alchemy; Chill by the Bay at Old Mall of Asia; PoolPay at PMMS; Solo Bike w/ DJ Joel B. at Metro Blvd. on Dolce w/ DJ Alfons Cuenco & Mr. Bubbles at 80 Cafe; DA Mark Reveal & Crown Jam at Embassy Club; Throwdown w/ DJ Bryan Alcantara at All's Worse Sessions at Fantasia; DJ Jared at Orbit; Orbit w/ Cognito; Mr. Brown at Rhythm Bar; HELP: Pilots I Love Wednesdays at Mendi's; Soul Shaker w/ DJ Marco Garcia at Embassy Circles; Five Fridays at Temple; Ariadne at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; The Soho at The Bistro; DJ Scratch-mark at Palace of Jaipur; Thirsty Bistro at Cafe Havana Greenbelt; Island Time Mendi's.

Schedule may change without prior notice. Be a member, listing of events, text 24-7-1203 through your mobile phone and send to 2203. (Globe) and 2203 (Smart). Submit your schedules before 3pm the to entertainment24-7.com & 9402424 700 to 800.com. Text now for the 2007 National Search 2007! Log on to www.mtvpilipinas.com for details.

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The quick gray rat jumps over the crazy kitchen

SCENES from "Ratatouille"

FRESH FROM THE SUCCESS OF LAST year's "Cars," the latest film from the talented folks at Pixar Animation Studios is "Ratatouille," the unlikely story of a rat named Remy who dreams of becoming a great chef in a 5-star Parisian restaurant. Being a rodent in a restaurant obviously has its own unique problems, but Remy isn't about to let prejudice and poor source of get in his way and once he forms an alliance with a lowly kitchen assistant named Linguini he is soon turning the snooty world of haute cuisine upside down. The ultimate in out-of-water tale, the hilarious, delightfully inventive Ratatouille is directed by Brad Bird, who wrote and directed another of Pixar's seemingly unstoppable string of hits, the superhero adventure "The Incredibles." Bird began work on his first animated film when he was 11 and his other credits include the award-winning "The Iron Giant." Bird talks about how he made a rat lovable.

THE MAN who made a rat lovable.

The makers of 'Finding Nemo' went under the diving. The animators on Cars went on racetracks. Did you do your research for Ratatouille in sewers?

I'd love to tell you that I spent weeks and weeks hanging out in sewers (laughs) but the vault of the movies is that I relied on some documentaries, especially a very funny one that was made by a friend of mine named Mark Lewis. We also had two here in the studio. We didn't have the wild ones because they are kind of creepy and look like they could take you out to the alley and beat you up but we had some lab rats which are fluffy and nice and we just watched them lots and lots. I love the way they smell everything around them and take in their surroundings through their noses. It's the logic at least it's not much of a stretch of the imagination to think that an animal that experiences the world through its nose might want to become a cook.

Do you work the same way when you create rats as you do with superheroes?

Superheroes is hiding or fair who want to work, you're just playing pretend. Filmmaking is simply a high tech version of being a little kid and imagining anything you want to, no matter how fantastic. A black person came up to me after a screening of The Incredibles and said, "Who wrote Frozone?" So I told him that it was me and that I wrote the whole movie, and he went "Yeah, but who wrote Frozone?" He wouldn't believe that I could write a convincing black superhero, but I'm not a small Asif German. Asif Japanese women either [laughs] and I also wrote it, the fashion guru in The Incredibles. All you're doing when you're making a movie is putting on different hats and saying, "Well, how would the girl feel at this point and how would the rat feel at this point?" Immersion in particular is a fantastic medium because you can have so many goofy ideas as you want and you get to put them all up there on the screen.

Remy, the hero of your Ratatouille, is of course a rat and rats aren't usually thought of as very cuddly. So you actually like rats?

Animation has a long history of empathizing with animals of all shapes and sizes and in my fantasy world I definitely like rats because they only want to get along with us humans. Do I like rats in the real world? Every animal has a place in the grand scheme of things and rats are very resilient creatures, so I think they deserve some respect for that.

Did you worry when you began work on the film that the audience might go, "Yuck! A rat!"?

People have this aversion to rats but I didn't think you could get around it by not having the rats involved in story initiation. Instead I thought we should just go with all the things that people recognize and know about rats and then move the audience past that. There's a moment at the very beginning of the film where we see Remy with a cookbook in his hand and there's a female flame on him and [rose-colour] he says, he's clearly a little bit apologetic about being a rat. So it's like he's acknowledging, "Yeah, I'm a rat and I know you may have a problem with that."

That's still a big leap to a rat being lovable, isn't it?

Yes, but acknowledging the discomfort is the first step. If you ever watch a TV comedian or somebody that's maybe super-down or super-tall, the best comedians get that out of the way right away. Like a fat comedian will come out and spend the first minute or two of their routine talking about the fact that they're fat. You can see the audience relax and go, "Okay, he knows he's fat and now I can enjoy the routine," rather than going, "Lordy he's fat and I can't think about anything else." It's about acknowledging the elephant in the room or in our case, the rat in the room. So hopefully, if we've done our job right, we've taken you from "Yuck! Rats!" to, you know, maybe these guys aren't so bad and maybe we can sympathize with this rat.

Super
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The gravy on Gary

Twelve Super! questions for Gary Valenciano

By Pepe Diokno

TWELVE YEARS AFTER HIS starring role in the teen dance flick, "Hataw Na," OPM legend/TV hero/God-anointed Gary Valenciano is back on the big screen, this time in his first ever non-singing role, playing a father in the independent film, "Galeong." Super! sat down with Gary V and got the gravy on the action.

"I say, there's not going to be another Gary Valenciano."
-Gary V

What took you so long to make another film?

I've just been waiting for a good script—something worth putting time and effort into.

I made a lot of films when I was younger, but back then, when I'd get an offer to do a film like ... (pauses), which was my very first film, they'd tell me I'd play a singer. I'd go, 'Yehey, I'm an OPM artist!'

I did get other offers. I worked with Lino Brocka twice—and he told me, 'You can be a really good actor.' But at that time, I was looking for the right films, and after I did films with him, I decided that the last one would be "Hataw Na."

I felt that I would be unveiling cocoy, that [the] teenybopper[s] waiting for me—which I didn't want happening.

Still on about your role in "Galeong":

The film is about three young boys who desperately want to go to this resort so girls watching (either sex) bathing—they're SID; it's innocent.

The problem is, the only way to get to the resort is with a bike, because it's far away, and only one of them has a bike. The other two do everything they can to get this one bike their size. [Crap around in an old house, but ... just when they have the money to buy the bike, they come across people who are in more need of the money.

I play the father of these two boys, and there's a connection between my father and the person who owns the bike the boys are trying to get. And, my character doesn't have a good relationship with his father.

You gotta have faith!

Does your faith have anything to do with the films you choose?

Yes, of course. Let's put it this way, when I did the second film with Lino Brocka, I let myself wind up to him, and we spoke one-on-one. The film we did was about the, the soul/fall of the singer—sex, drugs, alcohol ... all that.

THURSDAY 21

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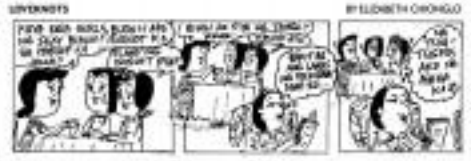

KITCHEN AND KEGGY BY LYNN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PANELLINO

BIKO MACHINE BY RAMON ARBEN

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TULDOK BY RAFU AND TATJAN HILARIDEAU

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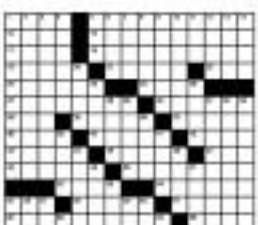

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	6	1				2	7	
	9		3		2		6	
		4	2		9	5		
		8	4		1	3		
	3		5		6		9	
	1	7				8	4	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	8	9	6	7	3	4	2	1
4	1	3	8	2	5	6	7	9
7	6	2	9	1	4	5	8	3
1	3	8	5	4	6	2	9	7
2	7	6	1	9	8	3	5	4
9	5	4	2	3	7	1	6	8
6	9	5	4	8	1	7	3	2
3	2	1	7	6	9	8	4	5
8	4	7	3	5	2	9	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Photos by Dion Leo

The gravy on Gary

'Where is the breadbasket of talent in Asia? It's the Philippines.'

From page F1

the script required me to do some of that. I said, 'Look, if it's coursework of hands for us to change some of that, then you can give the role to somebody else.'

I don't wanna play a role that would take people time to believe what they're watching. Create people are so used to the real fare, instead of watching the movie and appreciating the performance, they're going to go, 'Why did he do that?'

Now, there was another film I was supposed to do with Lito Rodis, before he passed away, which never pushed through. That—that was the film that Mark Lim said, "I want this to be your film. I want you to come out there and show what you've got." The film wouldn't have something that people wouldn't have been used to seeing me do, but at the end there was this redeeming thing ...

At that time I had been in the industry for barely 10 years, so it wouldn't've been okay for me to make a movie that people wouldn't have expected from me.

Has being in an independent production something that attracted you to "Sidlang"?

In high school, I used to make my own short films. I used to try making digressive stories. I used to create effects on Super 8, I would buy these Super 8 filmstrip magazines and read about how they did certain things. So I was really into that.

When you told me there was an indie film being offered to me, the word indie ya lang, it already got to me. Cause there is more freedom ... it's the creative process; I love how things take shape or not.

GARY V. Sonez Perreras, and Rebecca Arevalo in the Apalisoks

What attracted me to the film was the prospect of working with kids. I like working with kids. I've worked with my children as many times. I didn't have to make marked adjustment to the independent production process; I was familiar with the process of working.

'My music isn't just 'ear candy'—it's not just to entertain.'

Better Valenciano

What makes you like working with younger artists—do you feel a need to teach ...?

I love to teach. As a matter of fact, when I used to direct a lot with The Homewrens, we used to have little acting sessions, and I would teach. I love to teach, I love seeing the sparkle in people's eyes when they learn something, I love that.

I get asked, "Where do you think there's going to be another Gary V?" I say, there's not going to be another Gary Valenciano. Don't get me wrong, I'm not being negative, I'm just saying that talent—music, the ability to write, sing and dance—is just going up. Standards are changing. So there will be another Gary Valenciano.

What has changed, between the time you started out and now?

Everything is faster paced now. You have to think of ways to keep people glued. It's the MTV generation.

Are you worried about that?

No. It's a challenge for me, especially with concerts, where you have to keep people's attention for two and a half hours.

I am amazed I see a lot of young people at my concerts. That encourages me, that young people listen.

So, I'm not worried about it. I would become worried if I start working until people who are afraid to step out of the box.

You talk about "stepping out of the box." You've very much part of mainstream media, and a criticism of mainstream is that it doesn't step out of the box ...

Yeah, what you think of mainstream media, those currently aren't that many people who lead that. I have to admit, there are those who will never—or at least, not pre-step out their comfort zone. And perhaps, it will take independent artists to change that—to change the minds of people.

The young generation is really looking for something new. You can tell. In music, with the bands that have come out, because, it's really fun to listen on looks. It didn't matter how you sounded, if you looked good, you'd come on, and, 'wow. Now, it doesn't matter how you look, you're just good and out there, and as long as your music is good, good.

If that can spill over to the movie industry, then I think we'd have something going.

But we do need to open up mindsets of big, established companies and make them take risks.

Creativity

In the Philippines—with piracy, high amusement taxes, others royalties aren't enforced—where do you find the incentive to create?

My music isn't just "ear candy"—it's not just to entertain. I look at my music as music that speaks to people and that becomes part of my experience.

It bothers me that there are songs that are passed out from Bar One, sometimes when I come out on stage, I play a song, and people tell me, "I heard your song," which they downloaded online or something. But they come to me and say, "That changed my life." How can you compare one song being passed to me and being changed? There's no comparison.

I'm walking on very thin ice, there. I can easily say, "Peace is okay," but it's not. There are a lot of people that work on just one song, that go out and about what is required to make it possible. It is those that piracy affects.

Do you see a bright future of local film and music?

I see no problems with music. There are talents left and right that are going to come out with great ideas for videos, and how they've going to promote their own kinds of music. Independent labels may be the future, and mainstream companies won't have to worry about going to the studio all they'll have to do is download ... I don't know, that's something that's already being done now.

With the movies, I know movies need a little more push. I personally think it's just going to take one success—one rare movie, but one success will open doors coming out—to change the mindsets of producers.

When it comes to creativity, we are certainly not left behind. We think, there are economic and political concerns to think about, too.

But I don't think our situation in the political arena, or even poverty, should define how the creative community of the Philippines is supposed to create. So I don't think any of those things should be a hindr to our creative processes.

World domination

You've performed all around the world. What is it going to take for more Filipino artists to be recognized/taken nationally? Said differently, Filipino artists need an international audience?

I think we need—rather, we are worthy of imparting and entertaining audiences. But we need a lot of support. We need visionaries that can look at an artist and say, "This person can make it." As to when that's going to happen, I don't know.

There are so many artists here that are so good—and if packaged the right way, managed the right way, developed the right way ... It's not just about artist management, it's about artist development, too. So, you build up the artist, you put him out there to the world, and hope it will happen.

Wilsmith and artists seem to make it internationally, they have to make that their goal, and keep it in mind. Rewarding companies must also have that in mind, if you put that together ...

People's eyes are on the Philippines. Yes, the bureaus are great. So, the Indonesians and the Malaysians have their stuff out there—but you tell them, where is the breadbasket of talent in Asia? It's the Philippines.

Do you plan to make more movies?

Whether it's independent or mainstream, whether it's to be in a film or more a film ... I'm keeping my doors wide open.

"Sidlang" is now playing at the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. "Sidlang" is a Rabbit Bunyan production, directed by Auhea Hernandez and written by Jeanne Lim.

DADDY GARY: Gary V starts in Cinemalaya's "Sidlang"

Tours, Leisure & Chow

Where to Stay Where to GO

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Flourishing of the seasons

EXPERIENCE THE CULMINATION OF A gastronomical journey at Seasons, Manila Pavilion Hotel's newest innovative lifestyle restaurant, from noon time's expected to dusk's. Seasons has captured the metropolis' diverse palate and modern dining preferences.

Welcoming guests with a familiar occasion similar to that of leaves falling in an afternoon sunset, is the largest dining area of Seasons Autumn, as named after the season it represents, awaits an hour conveniently accessible buffet menu—the hot, cold, soup and desserts and pastry.

A few steps from the Autumn section is an oriental nook situated beside the bar. The dining area Mashing to form red slowly represents the season where the heat of the sun is in full swing. Amidst the intensity of the Summer time ensemble is a calming backdrop of a glass enclosed oasis that displays a garden landscape festooned by a cascade of running water.

One secluded section at the far side of the restaurant delicately depicts the icy chill of winter. Here called the Winter section, furnishings inlaid with frosty blue and crisp white hues, hanging ceiling lamps in the fashion of icicles remind one of the season's cold luxury.

Finally, find yourself dazzled by the effervescence of spring in a corner dining area composed of floral and pastel motifs. Named after the season of bloom, Spring is separated by collapsible glass door panels for the purpose of converting it to a single exclusive spot for larger groups.

Seasons is open daily from 6:30 am to 10:30 p.m. For reservations, please call Manila Pavilion Hotel at 5320320 5321 extension 2318. Manila Pavilion Hotel is now part of Waterfront Philippines Inc, the largest Filipino-hotel chain in the country. It is located at United Nations Avenue corner Maria Orosa Street, Manila.

A flavourful voyage at The Bellevue

GO ON A DAILY FOOD TRIP AT THE SOUTHERN METRO MANILAS ultimate dining Mecca, The Bellevue Hotel, with its Gastronomic Excursion buffet. The hotel's resto-dining outlet, the Café at Any, invites you to different worlds of taste and flavour every single day. Asian buffet is on offer for Mondays, Italian on Tuesdays, Japanese on Wednesdays, Chinese on Thursdays, Seafood on Fridays and an international selection during Saturdays and Sundays.

But this culinary blast with its Poolside Rainy Cookout. Lounge around the poolside and savor the cool rainy day breezes while partaking of your favorite rainy day comfort food. Choose from a host of mouthing burgers or a serving of hot chicken, beef or seafood noodle soup paired with complementary crispy shrimp and an iced tea or hot beverage of your choice. Let good food and home-like warmth drown out this rainy season. Available throughout July. And, mark the brights of August two Nite with The Bellevue Hotel's Color of the Month for July: Chocolate Mi'mini is a rich combination of banana puree cheese, cheesecake, almonds and cherries on a colorful cake that's as delightful to the eyes as it is to the palate. Take the path to dessert heaven, only at The Bellevue. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

The ultimate indulgence

THE DIVINE TASTES OF EUROPE'S FINEST shaped wild mushrooms 'risotto-like', take center stage in a luxurious dinner event at 7pm at The Think of Mandarin Oriental, Manila on Friday, July 27 in four exquisite wines and champagne from the region's top producers. *Le dîner de printemps*, that will complement the beguiling semi-course epicurean feast prepared by The Think chef Stefan Stopp and his team of connoisseurs.

Wine and gourmet enthusiasts will find a delectable feed. At three ensemble chardonnay courses paired with splendid wines: Goth cherry tomatoes with chamomile, parmesan and angela penne paired with Argento Nine Vines, Viognier, South Australia 2006; Bitten chamomile panna cotta with pan-fried scallop served with coriander foam, Pan-fried veal sweetbread on egg-infused potato gnocchi and chamomile ice cream with Nivet Monnin di Ay, Rosé, Brut 2005; Green apple and celery sorbet, Pan-fried duck breast in juniper and red currant sage pumpkin mash potatoes, served champagne and three bonus paired with 'deuxième Rose'in Merlot, Chile 2004; Gorgonzola and chamomile mousse with Houghton Late Picked Semillon, Australia 2006; topped with Mille feuille of vanilla mousse and crispy filo dough with caramelized orange with Penfolds Bridgewood Hill, NV Sparkling Wine, Australia.

As the evening unfolds, Teresa Avila will play enchanting piano music befitting the lavish evening, while guests enjoy the aperitifs. The luscious wine dinner is at P2,500+++ per person. Reservations are recommended. Call The Think at 750 8888 extension 3211 to 3431.

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IN THIS ISSUE

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SATURDAY Special

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Associate Editor Rina P. Jalip

Email at your leisure: sat_special@inquirer.com.ph

Julia Roberts' niece is another pretty woman

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD
Rubrico V. Nepomuceno

ROBERTS: Rita has acted a dazzling smile.

LONDON—IF LIL LIBBY ROBERTS is a pretty young woman, blessed with the same dazzling smile that her aunt, Julia Roberts, is famous for.

We were in this city when we interviewed Emma a few weeks ago, when Julia gave birth to Hazey Daniel, her third child with husband, Danny Moder. "I've been here for a week, so I may have taken Hazey was born," Emma, lovely in a short red dress and black jumpy, told us. "And I'll be here for two more months, so I won't see him until I get back to LA." (Julia gave birth to twins, Hazel and Phinnaeus, in 2004.)

The daughter of Eric Roberts, Julia's older brother, is the new Nancy Drew. She is in London to shoot the comedy "Wild Child," about a misbehaving LA girl who is consequently sent to a strict English boarding school. Her TV show, "Unfabulous," on Nickelodeon, had its series finale on May 2004 (album, "Unfabulous and Other Emma Roberts").

Custody battle

As easy to persuade and happier for Emma than Julia, who helped raise her niece, Eminem's parents, Kim and Kelly Cunningham, split shortly after she was born. In Kelly's custody battle over Emma, Kim sided with her.

The resulting rift between brother and sister was recently downplayed by Kim, who was quoted in an interview as saying, "The estrangement was overstated. We broke the brothers and sisters...and that's it."

At the interview, Emma said she visits her dad on the set of TV's "Heroes," where he has a recurring role. Kim, who has already screened four episodes of the show, is also enjoying a newer opening that parallels his daughter's (so, he's in the cast of the new "famous" movie).

In "Nancy Drew," the perky and petite Emma, who plays the heroine in the film version of Carolyn Keene's beloved children's mysteries, is not sleuthing in 1930s Midwest but in today's Los Angeles. Helping her solve the mystery surrounding the death of a Hollywood actress are Mad Hatter (played by Alex Thierot) and Corky (Josh Flitter). Excerpts from our interview:

How big an influence was your aunt in your decision to become an actress?

I don't know if it was just her, in particular. It was more about being around her film's movie sets when I was younger. I just hung out and saw how the different departments worked. Those experiences inspired me—and also just what making movies was like. I just loved being on the set. They would tell me, "Emma, you have to go home—it's time!" And I would say "No, I want to stay!"

Most memorable set

What was the most memorable set you visited?

I loved being on Naomi's [now-husband Watts'] set. You'll see me in the background of some scenes. "Eternal Sunshine" was also really fun, with all the cute boys on that set!

Did you also visit your father?

I didn't really go to a lot of his sets because he was doing [stage] "8" [1996]. I would have been inappropriate if I did, because I was much younger then, whereas my sister was doing more youth-oriented and fun movies, so I visited her more. But, I visit my dad on the set of his television show.

Do you live with your mom or your dad?

I live with my mom, but I do see my dad once in a while. I don't see him as much as I'd like to, because we're both busy. But, we have a good relationship.

Series

Have you an avid reader of the "Nancy Drew" book series when you were growing up?

I didn't really read the "Nancy Drew" series when I was young. I went to the "Sweet 16, Junior" books. So I got older, I read "Harry Potter" and "Gossip Girl." I started reading "Nancy Drew" after I got the part. The series was fun for me to read—especially after I made the movie—because I was like, "Oh, this kind of like Nancy Drew, I guess."

How did Bruce Willis end up doing a cameo?

It was random. I thought this was so cool, because I had just met him before. I knew his daughter, so it was really exciting. [*He had seen each Part*]

In the movie, Nancy Drew learns for Lil with a little makeover and yet, she comes up with a new outfit every[laughter].

Nancy is supposed to be a good detective, yet she can't tell that a boy likes Thierot likes her, in real life, do you have boys pursuing you?

I don't know if there are boys pursuing me. If they are, I'm unaware of it. But, that's the funny thing about Nancy—she's so smart about everything else, but the one thing that's easy to tell, she doesn't notice at all. She can't tell what's right in front of her!

You worked with Johnny Depp at age 9. What was that experience like? Did your dad and assist offer words of caution about the movie business?

I had fun working with Johnny in [LAST]

THE YOUNG ACTRESS is smitten by the star Carolyn Keene's popular teenage sleuths

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VACANCY

Julia Roberts' niece . . .

"Mom"! I didn't realize what a big deal it was at the time, because I was only 4. But, looking back, it was a great experience! My family was very supportive. They just let me do my thing.

You've met many famous people at a young age. What among those people made you nervous?

I don't get that nervous—or, at least, I try not to—but when I saw Orlando Bloom, I got very nervous I saw him at the premiere of "Pirates of the Caribbean." I'm walked by me, and I was a fan fluttered!

Pic just spoke to Daniel Radcliffe and Rupert Grint. Who do you like better, Daniel or Rupert?

Rupert. Umm. I like him the best... he's cute!

Do you attend regular school?

I went to a regular school until seventh grade. Then, I was homeschooled. But, I have close friends from middle school who still keep in touch.

You're part of a new generation of actresses who will take over from the current generation. Some actresses are known more for partying. Does that bother anyone opposed to you?

It's not my thing. I hang out with friends. We go to each other's houses; we go to birthday parties, but we don't go clubbing.

What's keeps you grounded?

I have great friends and family!

What's your life like when you're away from movies on TV sets?

Aside from the fact that I don't go to school, I'm a pretty normal teenager. During the week, I do three hours of school everyday with my tutor. On weekends, I hang out with my friends.

Do you drive?

I don't. I didn't get my license in California... I didn't pass the test. But, I have a learner's permit, so I can drive with my parents. I don't have a car yet.

Driving test

Why did you fail the driving test?

I was nervous, and I wasn't ready. I blanked out of the turn lanes and then the red light. I'll try again, and we'll see what happens.

How do you like London?

I love it here—it's never gross in fact! My mom's dreaming of a couple of weeks. The character in this new movie is very different from Nancy Drew. I go to pick a bad girl who gets dropped off to boarding school. Then, she tries to get herself kicked out!

It's beautiful here, and I like the fact that, Everyone's like, "Oh, it's raining!"

But, I love it because it hardly rains in LA. I get myself a mini raincoat and a mini umbrella. My 6-year-old sister, Emma Bella's daughter with rock musician, Kelly Nichols) is here with me. She's been raised in LA, so she doesn't see a lot of rain. So, when it rains, she goes outside and has an orchestra!

Who's taking care of you here?

My mom.

Hair

Is that how your hair looks like normally?

This a normal. I'm "WILD child." I have a long platinum blonde wig down to my waist. They're going to make my hair darker.

Who decides how you look during public appearances? Do you have a say?

It's a combination. I have hair and make up people, but I can say what I like and don't like. For clothes, I have stylists, but I make the decisions.

You are also a singer with an album to your credit. Are you still interested in a music career?

I'm focusing on doing movies for now. When I'm a little older maybe I could pursue one more.

E-mail comments to 23281@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Hipster Report," at www.inquirer.net/blogs/jon.tan-hipsters-pov.

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SATURDAY Special

Cinematic hopes fligh high at CCP

By Nestor U. Torre

THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE Philippines is brimming with high hopes for a bountiful cut-into harvest this month. The final activity in the 2007 Cinemalaya or cutting CCP screening venues, with entire 100 in the final cuts and closes on view.

This year's competition features ...

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	3	4	5	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1	2	3	4
ROBINSONS CYBERGATE	1	2	3	4
MARKET! MARKET!	1	2		
	3	4	5	
TRINOMA	1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	

AT THE MALLS

Glorietta — Ayala Ferry Wars
Greenbelt — Brazilian Lambada Night
Alabang Town Center — Electrolandia Exhibit
Ayala Center Cebu — Accounting Gala Ball
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NOW SHOWING

Heart wins it for Pixar's latest feat

By Rito P. Asilo

"Ratatouille"
D: Brad Bird
W: Brad Bird, Jan Pinkava
Cast: Patton Oswalt, Ian Holm and Peter O'Toole

ONCE AGAIN, PIXAR ENTERTAINS with its latest visual feast about history. Patton Oswalt, a country mouse who dreams of becoming a master chef in the competitive gastronomic landscape of Paris, France.

He gets the rare chance to fulfill his lifelong ambition when he meets the awkward kitchen garbage boy, Linguini (Lou Romano), who enables Remy to practice his exceptional cooking ability in the restaurant formerly owned by the deceased gourmet chef, Auguste Gusteau (Brad Garrett), whom he admired the most. The place is now run by its ambitious head chef, Skinner (Ian Holm).

The restaurant has seen better days, but Remy and Linguini's unlikely partnership soon puts it back on the gastronomic map.

But, when a newly-revealed secret about the restaurant's ownership threatens Skinner's supposed proprietorship, the duo's friendship is put to test. And, internal problems notwithstanding, an compromising food critic, Anton Ego (unfortunately voice-acted by Peter O'Toole), is expected to use his himself the reason for the restaurant's newfound popularity!

Pixar's well-deserved reputation for technical polish and innovation is on full display under Brad Bird's confident direction. Yet while the ingenious digital cinematography likewise gives the Parisian setting a sparklingly dreamy look. As characters go about their daily tasks, nostalgia and romance seem seep into the movie's narrative core.

"RATATOUILLE." Sparklingly dreamy look.

It is in this refreshing twist, the film smashes the general public's negative perception of critics—in a conviction that is alternately hilarious and touching.

"Ratatouille's" characters, flesh and shudder with just the voice as they chase after their respective aspirations. But, the film's biggest asset is still its story. It's unconventional, improbable—and fodder for a long line of heartwarming and film affirming lessons that today's cynical world can learn a lot from.

It unknowingly dangles the hope for optimism and dreamers alike that "not everyone can be a great artist, but a great artist can come from anywhere!"

"Vacancy"
D: Richard Isthil
S: Kate Beckinsale, Luke Wilson

Genuinely believing David and Amy (Luke Wilson and Kate Beckinsale, respectively), a honeymooning couple after typical collegiate, find themselves in the middle of nowhere after straying off the Interstate.

They end up in a dreary motel inhabited by Mason (Frank Whaley) and his strange cohorts, who roam big hunks for the area! Since they don't want to be long for the couple to realize that they have become Mason's next victims.

Genius-winning director Marcus Nispel (2003's "Texas Chainsaw") gives the small film genre a flashy, frenetic pace and a more tormented quality. But, those plus points are eventually overwhelmed by the movie's narrative banality.

The Hungarian filmmaker's highly stylized direction propels the action at lightning speed, but interest in the proceedings soon sags when it becomes clear that the movie doesn't really have much to offer—other than the novelty of watching popular actors like Beckinsale and Wilson put their screaming, groaning and running skills to hairy overuse!

Light drama marks smooth transition for Meg Ryan

By Nestor Torre

THE LOW-KEY DRAMA/COMEDY "In the Land of Women," is a refreshing film that is hard to pin it down. On one hand, this tale of a lovesick-searching guy trying to get his life together would be easily dismissed as yet another sentimental sunshine dude-has-too-many-melancholies movie; on the other, it could be shafted for its gentle take on life's vagaries.

Youngest member

The impression may have something to do with the fact that the film is about—and scripted—by Jonathan Ezrahan's first movie. The son of Lawrence Kasdan ("The Big Chill") and besides of Jake (director of "The TV Set"), the youngest member of the family to join the business looks like he's gotten a few pointers from dad, though not all of them may have sunk in just yet.

The movie's protagonist, 26 year old Carlos Vilde ("The SOCIAL" Adam Brody) is only a year younger that Kasdan, and it feels as though he's projected his own years-something angst into his lead character. Not that (And) a bad thing per se, but it does get too-self-involved at times—it will remind you of those melancholying journal entries you once wrote in high school when you felt so, so, miserable-tized.

Famous girlfriend

The film starts off with Carlos's model/actress girlfriend, Sofia (Eleni Arsaya), dumping him to an LA diner. As tears well in his eyes, some two-seaters flock around his famous girlfriend (actor Ali) and asks for her autograph.

RYAN AND BRODY. Play regular folks going through difficult times.

His hapless struggle to swallow his tears is funny in a quiet way, and it establishes Carlos as a character you can feel sympathy for.

In fact, most of the movie's characters are sympathetic. When Carlos's long-neglected grandmother (Olympia Dukakis) starts reflecting about dying, he decides to temporarily stay with her in Michigan so that he can get away from his nervous ...and perhaps get reunited on the great American screenplay (he writes scripts for soft pornography).

Dysfunctional family

There, he meets the Chadwicks, the dysfunctional family who lives across the street. Sarah (Meg Ryan) and her daughter Lucy (Kristen Stewart, good-not-to-bad), and he is there. Shades of "The Graduate," "Jess Has To Be Land of Women!" Join us: Mrs. Robinson, and Carlos's as Benjamin.

Conflicted teenager

This is a result-perfect picture, with regular folks going through difficult times. Sarah, for the most, has unsure her husband to leaving an affair, and Lucy is your typical conflicted teenager who loves and hates her parents at the same time.

It sounds like a substantial TV drama, and the movie sometimes stumbles to that level, but it's saved by its characters and the actors who play them. Firstly, while connections having an engine in the film, is unexplained.

Ryan has made a smooth transition from rom-com bubbleness to a more mature fare. Stewart plays a very believable Lucy. But, it's Kasdan's performance that's particularly touching.

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MADNESS IN THE BIG DOME
NU vs UST • 2PM / LA SALLE vs ATENEO • 4PM
JULY 26 / THURSDAY

Cinematic

From page G4

Nonetheless, this year's Cinemalaya will also host the premieres of new digital by-name—"Barako" by Mario Cornejo, "Cinco Sa Singkwenta" by Joy Santos, Shugo Francisco and Jason Tomaro, "Thumping Dito ni Lumang at Matanding Kalaban" by Lino Tabada, "Una Ang" by Benji Santos, "Tiktik" by JP Caspio, "Relasi" by Cris Pablo, "Sapi" by Arvin Belarmino, "Kuya" by Alex Acharon, and "Mga Munting Mutia Delgado" by Ray Gibrakin.

So, filmbuffs should do their best to clear their schedules until July 29, so they can take full advantage of what the 2007 Cinemalaya has to offer.

Options

Aside from strolling of many fresh moving options that aren't offered by our mainstream cinema, they will experience "alternate democracy" to action.

Not much too long, filmmaking in the Philippines was erratically by a few major producers, due to the high costs involved. However, digital filmmaking has lowered production budgets and made it possible for many more people to have of their desires. Besides, that opening the industry to indie-democracy up to many more points of view, stories and characters.

Granted, some digital movies don't live up to their promise, but this early is alternative cinema's development. Some promising gems are expected and Cinemalaya delivered. What's expected is that filmmakers will on its way to authentic freedom.

SATURDAY Special

Shia LaBeouf gears up for the BIG TIME

By Nestor U. Torre

THE WORD IN HOLLYWOOD THESE DAYS IS that the youngster most likely to make it big the even is—Shia LaBeouf.

Most people know him from his current hit hit, "Transformers," but if have read that he's been around the show biz scene for years. Talk about the so-called "overnight discovery" who's actually been slogging it out in the wings for a long time, Shia is it!

According to Shia himself, the performing bug first bit him when—for now still in his mother's womb! That's his cue to be voiced from a family of entertainers and artists.

Circus

His maternal grandfather was a theatre buff sometime, but Judeo worked as a miner at a circus, and his mother was a dancer. Thus, Shia jokes, "I was acting when I came out of the womb."—Well, Shia, if you say so.

In any case, Shia was performing professionally by age 10, as a runaway come to comedy duke in California. His unique appeal was noted. He had "disgustingly dirty" material, and a "10-year-old sensibility that 10-year-olds lack."

Even after he dropped the "disgustingly dirty" material, Shia's career prospered. Way back in 1999, he played Herbert the mascot on the TV show, "Freaks and Geeks." But, he really found his stride on "Even Stevens," where he was cast as Louis, for which he won a Daytime Emmy award.

In 2003, Shia appeared in his first film, "Holes," with Jon Voight and Sigourney Weaver. Voight gave him a look on acting and the mode. Shia realize that acting could be more than just a job. He then played a small role in "I, Robot" and acted in "Constantine" with Keanu Reeves.

In 2006, the dramatic film, "Bobby," called for Shia to do his first nude scene when his character stepped naked while on an LSD trip. —Talk about an actor going for his roles!

Serial killer

In 2007, Shia finally hit the big time. Last April, he starred in "Eagle Eye," where he played a teenager who—suspected that his neighbor was a serial killer.

The film has yet to be shown in the Philippines, and when it does, it should benefit from Shia's awe-making performances in the "monster" hit that "Transformers" has turned out to be.

Another Shia movie about to open in town is the animated feature, "Surf's Up," in which he voices-with Jim Brown.

Up next for Shia is another television calling role in a major film, "Indiana Jones IV," set to hit screens in May 2008. Shia will also star in a thriller, "Eagle Eye," and has signed on for two "Transformers" sequels.

Earlier this year, Shia was named 2007's "Star of Tomorrow" by the Hollywood Foreign Correspondents Association of Toronto Ontario in the Rotten.

—All that success can go to a young actor's head! But, Shia vows not to endup as yet another spoiled-out, drunken-driving young celebrity, because he loves and values his work too much.

He has even made a calculated effort to stay away from Hollywood's bright and lights party scene, believing that, "if the industry likes you highly because you're always partying, they will take your work lightly as well."

Why is Shia allowed such a big hit with fans and Hollywood as well? Critics have cited his appealing combination of low-tech boy and classy screen professional, and rate that he's "just be running the best young actor in Hollywood!"

LABEOUF Shia can really go up on yet another upward curl, drunken-driving young celebrity.

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1 HARRY POTTER 5 • 3D
1:30 4:15 6:50 9:30PM

2 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00AM 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00PM

3 DIE HARD 4
12:00NN 2:35 5:05 7:35 10:05PM

4 TRANSFORMERS
11:30AM 1:40 4:20 7:15 10:00

5 VACANCY
11:20AM 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 9:55PM

6 PLANET TERROR
12:30NN 3:00 5:30 7:30 9:55PM

7 WHITE NOISE 2
1:20AM 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00PM

8 Including: MORENO
12:20NN 2:55 5:30 7:50 10:10PM

9 HARRY POTTER 5
1:10AM 3:40 6:20 9:05PM

10 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
11:10AM 1:30 3:50 7:40 9:50PM

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1 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00AM 1:40 4:30 7:10 10:00AM

2 PLANET TERROR
12:00NN 2:05 5:00 7:30 10:00PM

3 WHITE NOISE 2
12:00AM 2:05 4:30 6:30 8:30 10:30

4 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
12:00NN 2:20 4:40 6:50 9:10 11:30

5 VACANCY
12:00NN 2:10 4:20 6:30 8:40 10:50

6 DIE HARD 4
11:00AM 1:10 3:30 5:50 8:10 10:30

7 TRANSFORMERS
11:00AM 1:30 4:10 8:50 10:00

METRO EAST

1 TRANSFORMERS
12:00NN 3:00 6:00 9:10AM

2 PLANET TERROR
1:40AM 4:10 6:40 9:10AM

3 HARRY POTTER 5
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00PM

4 WHITE NOISE 2
11:00AM 1:10 4:30 6:40 9:10PM

5 VACANCY
12:00AM 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

6 DIE HARD 4
12:00AM 2:10 4:10 6:10AM

7 HARRY POTTER 5
11:00AM 2:00 5:00 8:00PM

NOVALICHES

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 TRANSFORMERS

4 WHITE NOISE 2
5 VACANCY
6 DIE HARD 4

PIONEER

1 HARRY POTTER 5
12:00AM 3:00 6:00 9:00AM

2 PLANET TERROR
1:00AM 3:00 5:00 7:00AM

3 VACANCY
12:30 2:30 4:30 6:40 9:40AM

4 IN THE LAND OF WOMEN
9:00 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40

STA. ROSA

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 VACANCY
3 THE CONDEMNED
4 DIE HARD 4
5 TRANSFORMERS

LIPA

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 TRANSFORMERS
3 DIE HARD 4
4 THE CONDEMNED
5 NEXT

DASMARIÑAS

1 TRANSFORMERS
2 THE CONDEMNED
3 VACANCY
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DIE HARD 4

IMUS

1 VACANCY
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 BUIO
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 DIE HARD 4
6 CAPE KARMA

ANGELES

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 VACANCY
3 BORDERTOWN
4 NEXT

TARLAC

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 HARRY POTTER 5
3 DIE HARD 4
TRANSFORMERS

STARMILLS

1 BORDERTOWN
2 DIE HARD 4
3 TRANSFORMERS

4 VACANCY
5 HARRY POTTER 5
6 NEXT

BACOLOD

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 2DIDAC
3 VACANCY
4 TRANSFORMERS
5 RESERVE
6 DIE HARD 4

ILOILO

1 HARRY POTTER 5
2 VACANCY
3 DIE HARD 4
4 HARRY POTTER 5
5 DUO
6 TRANSFORMERS

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ALIX (RIGHT). "The cinematic medium allows me to say a lot of things to people."

DIRECTOR'S CUT

Filmmaking is an exhilarating journey for Adolf Alix

By Ronald G. Mangahas

BEFORE MOVIE ALIX JR. WROTE and directed "Inamo" and his current Cinemalaya entry, "Kubot: The Ghost, the 29-year-old filmmaker-lawyer never made about whole thesis—or point.

But, after finishing three films, Atty. Alix now only endlessly about those intricate and the worlds they animate. "I like exploring themes. I'm not familiar with," he explains. "In the process, the exhilarating journey allows me to discover new things about myself."

The journey started for Alix when he discovered the power of the movies as a child boy in the town. Carrier. He watched old Tagalog movies during Lent afternoons. "I got fascinated with the medium and began making myself how films were made. By the time I watched Spielberg's 'E.T.,' I knew I wanted to become a filmmaker."

First screenplay

"The spine of any film is a story and so, I studied scriptwriting. My classmates scoffed. "Atty." (The Court),

Mysterious August on Hallmark Channel

MUST INSISTS, GET READY FOR a thrilling series of movies on the Hallmark Channel's "Mystery Weekend" programming slot.

Aug. 4 at 7 p.m., "Birthday: The Untold Story" is Out... finally Out!" investigates the death of a newspaper columnist.

Aug. 4 at 9 p.m., "Mystery Woman: Redemption" is about a bookstore owner who finds a murder victim's abandoned daughter. At 11 p.m., "Mystery Woman: Sentenced Front" investigates the death of an inmate.

Aug. 5 at 1 a.m., "Detective Murdoch—Except the Dying" proves that a woman's death isn't accidental. Aug. 12 at 7 p.m., "Birthday: Time for Murder" is about the death of a radio deejay. Aug. 12 at 9 p.m., "Mystery Woman: Game Time" investigates the death of a creator of game shows. At 11 p.m., "Midsomer Murders: A Tale of Two Zombies" is about the rivalry between two villages.

Aug. 12 at 1 a.m., "Detective Murdoch—Bear Him is Cold," is on the apparent suicide of Murdoch's protege.

Other dates: Aug. 18 at 7 p.m., "Birthday: Anybody Have Murder Mostly?" Aug. 19 at 1 a.m., "Mystery Woman: Game of Murder." At 11 p.m., "Midsomer Murders: Birds of Prey" Aug. 26 at 1 a.m., "Detective Murdoch—Under the Dragon's Tail."

Bamboo rocks Trinoma

The Bamboo rock band, Pinkdropper's ambassadors of music and style, tophlit Pembopper's "Sounds of Style" show at the Ayala Trinoma Activity Center at 4 p.m. on July 22. The popular band is fronted by Chiwawi and Manmoon, and joined by Mpx 53 Search Brothers.

The show celebrates the launch of Pembopper's flagship store at the metro's newest, hippest mall.

Bamboo's "Pembopper's Sounds of Style" show will go on a concert tour in Cebu, Davao, Baguio and Manila. Visit www.pembopp.com.

Montage

Last batch

The search for the Philippine Idolling Clarke of All Indies nominated its last batch of finalists recently on "MAO TV."

Allen Quinzin was hailed as Batch Nine's standout beauty and talent. Supporting were what they'll be in the series round by rooting AMINE NEE NAME/AGE/GENDER/ADDRESS and sending to 2366. A lucky voter can win P10,00 each week.

Nickelodeon's 'Big Help 2007' launched

Nickelodeon recently urged Nickmom from 2 to 14 years old to draw whatever they can with them to assist, by way of the five-month campaign, "Big Help 2007."

It has also linked up with Carmel Kalinga-Barong Second graders school volunteers, who raise funds and join building activities. The first Big Help ambassador a popular child star Making Mendes.

A contest design competition will soon be held, encouraging Nickmom to come up with patterns and concepts to make kids feel what sharing is. The best design will be the cover for the 10,000 donation coupons that will raise funds to benefit HIC Batang Bayan's Kapatagan Village.

The volunteering Big Help event is on Dec. 1. Log on to www.nickhelps.com.ph/help.

Tours

Today at SM Mall of Asia, David Archuleta performs to preteen his new album, 'Hold Tight.'

Today "Pinoy Dream Academy" finds Wing Commodore, Joy Is Silver and Ronnie Liang performing in Anaheim, California, with Jon Manoano and Mulding Brothers.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 6:30 a.m. "The Gospel." Tomorrow at 11:30 a.m., "Rain on the Fourth of July." July 22 at noon, "Backdraft." July 24 at 12:15 p.m., "Way of the Warrior." July 27 at 7 p.m., "Babe: Pig in the City."

On Cinemax today at 10 p.m., "The Last Boy Scout." Tomorrow at 3 p.m., "Dog Day Afternoon." July 23 at 9:15 a.m., "Six Days Seven Nights." July 24 at 7 p.m., "Resident Power." July 25 at 2:25 p.m., "Major Dundee." July 26 at 10 a.m., "Star Trek." July 27 at 1:30 p.m., "Nine Lives."

JOHN Lavoquero plays a defense attorney in Hallmark's popular crime series.

Spectacle, visual splendor reign supreme in Zhang Yimou's stage epic

"IMPRESSIONS," Breathtaking!

By Bobi Cervantes

I AM NO MUSEUM ADMIRER OF Zhang Yimou. His films are not only technically superior, his films underscoring of Chinese literary traditions is likewise admirable.

On our recent trip to China, when Ambassador Jesus Yabes instructed our tour guide, Tony Lin, to accept tickets for Consul General Alex Chua, himself and me while we were in pic. Unknown reality, I was more than elated.

The stage show, directed by Zhang Yimou, was supposed to be a spectacle performed right in the mouth of one of the rivers in the town [illegible].

Creation

We then drove to the scenic sight. What looked like a shore turned out to be a constructed stage filled with water, an spectacular sea scenes could be performed on it. The show was simply called "Impressions." Indeed, it was break all the narrative line, although it was supposed to be about the creation of earth.

The lights went out, that broke of not somehow stirred the stage. There must have been 500 in the cast! Then, a ballet number was performed on an elevated stage—right in the middle of the pool.

What appeared like snowy ships started to float across the pond to the sides and ebbs of the stunned audience. The show's underlying message: You came for spectacle, so spectacle you're going to get!

In one scene, whole villages come alive. Then, seven mountain peaks swim lit up!

In another scene, water buffaloes trotted along the performing dikes. Hundreds of yards of red silk dutch became waves, walls and fire! The dances were continuous, and spectacle followed spectacle—the next one more overwhelming than the last!

Jes mentioned a Chinese businessman who was so impressed with the Yimou production that he suggested we conceive a similar production in Tagaytay. You're talking many millions of pesos here, I worried.

Expensive

Then, I reminded him that we don't even have "many, many millions" of middle-class Chinese who can afford to support such an expensive show night after night.

Yimou not only has budget, corporate and government support going for him, he also has Chinese culture, discipline, heritage and patronage to sustain such an epic production!

Best actresses' portrayals set high standard for excellence

By Nestor U. Torre

AFTER PRC RICENTE CARE UP WITH ten "best supporting" list of best Filipino film actors, some readers asked us to do a companion listing of their female counterparts.

Since we aren't really into lists, we've decided to reply by citing some of our favorite actresses' best "signature" performances, the decade work that established or formed up their reputation for coming up with exceptional portrayals, despite the hard movie industry's strongly consensual bent and other limitations.

Luminous characterization

Nora Aunor, we remember, let her gutsy portrayal in "Anak Dalita." This was performance was nicely counterpointed by her luminous character-notion of the quintessential Filipina earth mother in "Bayan ng Lapu." Decades later, Nora gifted us with another unmistakable performance-cum-loving mother in "Selda."

Nora is still very much with us, and we think it's a crying shame that producers and directors aren't casting her in their more-significant TV and film productions.

Gloria for Tita Muñoz, arbiter from TV, film work was in "Flight of the Sparrow," "Like," "Inbestido Dilat," – and in so many performances on "Bulawanan" that a viewer-critic suggested that she appear in our mid "The Tita Muñoz Insensitive Hour"!

ROMEL. Classy performance in "Anak Dalita."

In the theater, Tita was in a class all her own, combining talent, beauty, intensity and artistic insight to superbalate degree in outstanding productions like the Rolando Tinio-rendered version for her, "Claudia and Her Mother" and "It's April, What Are We Doing Here?", "Insensitive Last Summer" and "Sorry Strong Numbers."

Comedienne

Some people may regard the Late Nida Blanca as "just" a comedienne, but they are so very wrong. In the first place, there's nothing "just" about making people laugh, because it's one of the most difficult feats a performer can pull off.

MUFASE. Talent, beauty, intensity and artistic insight.

In addition, Nida wasn't only a comedienne, she was also a singer, dancer, dramatic actress and movie-industry leader. Her "signature" performance? There are so many fine portrayals, but one that lingers glowingly in the memory is Nida's [illegible] and dance number as a master of ceremonies in one of her early movies. And her tight-as-your-dance number in other experimental theatre-like productions!

Lolita Rodriguez? That's easy: Her early "Sisa in All" portrayal of a restless opposite Dolphy's Burning Amy. Her exemplified dramatic turn in "Luisa," a TV movie for the BBC. And as the tortured Rosita in "Tinatanag Ka Pigasil Kaling"!

Green honey analyzed

SOMETIME AGO, A FRIEND GAVE US A bottle of green honey. She was excited about it and was coming about its green efficacy. "Is that product genuine?" we asked.

The story given by the beekeeper is that a special bee—locally called tawag—gathers chlorophyll from green algae and combines this with nectar to produce green honey.

Letter

Recently, we received a letter from Dr. C.B. Cervancia, head of the National Center for Enrollment for Bee Research and Development, who explained the case in some of the problem. Her main points:

1. The tawag is not a bee but a wasp. Cervancia told us, "Unlike bees, which have a reputation for honey in their bodies, wasps are unable to collect and transfer it to their nests for storage. Since they're not known to consume algae, their production of green honey is even more unlikely, strike one.

2. Some people claim that green honey is found in the forests of Mindanao. Then, investigators from DTI went off scratching for it in its natural environment. Cervancia discloses: "Investigators could find that it can't be found in nature" Strike two.

Pigments

3. How did the honey become green? Chemical analysis indicates that green honey is adulterated with blue and yellow pigments. Strike three.

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark